

NUS Students' Green Fund

End of fund report



Contents

Acknowledgements	3
1. Headline findings and recommendations	5
1.1 The Students' Green Fund	5
1.2 SGF key outputs	5
1.3 Key SGF outcomes and impacts	6
1.4 Wider SGF outcomes	7
1.5 Key ingredients for student's union sustainability projects	7
2. Introduction to the fund, the SGF projects and this report	10
2.1 Introduction to SGF	10
2.2 The funded projects	10
2.3 Approach to evaluation	16
3. Outputs	19
3.1 Scale of project outputs	19
3.2 What outputs have been delivered?	19
3.3 Fund and project reach	23
4. Outcomes and impact	26
4.1 Objective: Initiating a step change in student engagement in sustainability issues	26
4.2 Objective: Enabling students to become meaningful agents for change on sustainability issues	29
4.3 Objective: Ensuring sustainability remains an institutional priority within the sector	31
4.4 Objective: Put English higher education on the map for its sustainability efforts	34
4.5 Impacts on pro-sustainability attitudes and behaviours	36
4.6 Integration of sustainability into the curriculum (Education for sustainable development)	44
4.7 Employability	45
4.8 Personal development and university life	48
4.9 Institutional relationships and commitment	52
4.10 Carbon	54
5. Lessons for delivery and engagement	56
5.1 Key ingredients for running sustainability projects within SUs/institutions	56
5.2 General lessons on engaging students in sustainability related projects	57
5.3 Lessons on motivating behaviour change	59
5.4 Lessons on running social enterprises	60
5.5 Lessons on student-led grant schemes	61
5.6 Lessons on community partnerships	63
5.7 Lessons on academic partnerships and engaging staff	63
5.8 Lessons on working in the private rented housing sector	64
6. Why things worked: linking with theory	67
6.1 Reflections on SGF projects	67
6.2 ISM analysis of SGF projects	67
6.3 ISM Individual context	68
6.4 ISM - Social context	69
6.5 ISM Material context	71
6.6 Learning and change analysis of SGF Projects	73
7. Delivery of SGF	86
7.1 Supporting the successful projects	86
7.2 Communications and dissemination	89
8. Legacy of SGF	93
8.1 What next for SGF projects?	93
8.2 NUS' role in supporting SGF projects	96

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Headline findings and recommendat ions

1. Headline findings and recommendations

1.1 The Students' Green Fund

The Students' Green Fund (SGF) has provided students' unions with £5 million funding to develop transformative, student-led sustainability projects with real impact and legacy. From September 2013 to August 2015, 25 ambitious projects have been delivered in 26 students' unions, resulting in a step change in student engagement with, and progress towards, embedding sustainability at participating institutions. Student leadership has been at the heart of the fund, with the ultimate aim of advancing students' unions ability to operate as hubs of sustainability within their institutions, and beyond in to the wider community.

1.2 SGF key outputs

Through a diversity of approaches, led by students' unions and individual students, in partnership with institutions, businesses and community organisations, the 25 projects have collectively delivered the following outputs¹:

¹ These examples represent just a snapshot of the activity that has taken place across the two years of funding. Further details of the range of outputs achieved can be found in section 3 of this report, and in individual project summaries in appendix 1.

- The involvement of at least 121,738 students – and probably far more;
- The involvement of at least 7670 staff – and probably far more;
- The creation of 42 full time and 17 part time staff positions;
- The creation of at least 335 paid student positions e.g. interns;
- The involvement of at least 5,500 in-depth volunteers;
- The running of at least 100 workshops and training courses;
- The delivery of approximately 1,700 audits of businesses, homes, schools and other organisations;
- The design of 26 websites and social media campaigns (including NUS central efforts) that have received hundreds of thousands of visitors and tens of thousands of followers;
- The creation of a multitude of toolkits and other resources;
- The development of infrastructure (e.g. waste services, cafes, markets);
- The formation of hundreds of partnerships with businesses, local authorities and third sector groups;
- The funding of 193 student-led projects;
- The development of 10 student-led social enterprises;
- The creation of a new currency token for local businesses with environmental and ethical credentials, being used to the value of £12,000;
- The organisation of at least 500 events; and
- The generation of local and national media coverage.

1.3 Key SGF outcomes and impacts

At the start of the fund, key targets were outlined, and achievements against these targets are as follows:

Initiating a step change in student engagement with sustainability: Over the two years at least 121,738 students have engaged with the 25 SGF projects and their activities, and many of these are reported to be students who have not previously engaged with the concept. Additionally, 335 paid student staff positions and 10 student officer positions have also been created as a direct result of SGF activity in participating students' unions. For some students' unions, securing SGF funding provided the opportunity to engage in sustainability for the first time, and in one project the funding was the basis for the founding of the students' union based on an ethos of sustainability.

Enabling students to become meaningful agents for change on sustainability issues: The SGF project activities have equipped students with the values, skills and understanding needed to define, shape and lead work on sustainability at their institutions. The presence of the SGF project has also raised the profile of student opinion, and abilities, in the area, leading to increased engagement and partnership between the students' union and parent institution. Linking up with local community organisations has also enabled students to extend their influence for change beyond the campus boundary. Of particular note is the impact of in-depth participation, e.g. through leadership, on increased feelings of empowerment and agency for sustainability amongst student participants.

Ensuring sustainability remains an institutional priority: The legacy for many projects involves the creation of sustainability specific roles, to ensure the subject continues to receive attention from across the institution beyond the end of the funding period. Elsewhere, SGF projects have influenced the development of sustainability strategies and integrated sustainability into existing infrastructure, processes (e.g. course rep training) and curricula, again continuing to put sustainability in the spotlight.

Put English higher education on the map for its sustainability efforts: A combination of high-profile events, local and national media coverage, and the receipt of

awards has helped to raise awareness of the action taken within institutions delivering higher education on sustainability. Individual SGF project activities have also reached out to international audiences, for example, through involving international students in their activities, but have also raised their profile closer to home through partnerships with local communities.

1.4 Wider SGF outcomes

As might be expected, the delivery of such a broad array of project activities has resulted in a wealth of additional outcomes including:

Increases in student participation in pro-environmental behaviour and awareness of sustainability initiatives: SGF projects have targeted changes in behaviour across a broad range of environmental themes, including energy, waste, food and transport. In most cases, tracking individual cases of behaviour change has been difficult, however, survey research has revealed half of participants have either changed specific behaviours, or have the intention of doing so².

These changes, along with broader changes at institutional and community levels, have resulted in the saving of 4608.6 tonnes of carbon across the 25 projects.

Improved employability amongst student participants: As well as enhancing 'life skills' that enable students to consider and reduce the sustainability implications of their day to day actions, participating in SGF projects has also enabled student participants to develop both sustainability and transferable skills that improve their employability. In both instances, this is particularly pronounced amongst student participants that have been involved at a leadership level. There are individual examples of students who report their involvement in SGF project activities enabled them to secure a job post-graduation.

Contributing to personal development and wellbeing: Participants have noted the added benefits of taking part in SGF project activities in terms of personal benefits, such as making new friends and, for many, the first incentive to get involved with their students' union. Additionally projects have provided 'a space' away from day to day university life, enabling improved mental and physical health.

1.5 Key ingredients for student's union sustainability projects

Bringing together the reflections from SGF projects on what has worked, the common characteristics of a successful sustainability project include: securing high level support (be that students' union leadership or buy-in from the parent institution); ensuring project activities are highly visible and accessible at a range of levels; and strongly considering the intricacies of the academic timetable. Projects have also noted the benefits of emphasising the transferability of outcomes and benefits beyond sustainability, whilst offering a variety of opportunities that involve progression routes for committed individuals; and ensuring opportunities include a chance to devolve responsibility to students to lead.

Using hooks linked to existing interest has also been identified as a key way of securing engagement, and developing activities that enable peer to peer learning were seen as effective in encouraging behavioural change. Finally, branding and messaging have also been highlighted as important factors for success; using the right language, having a

² Taken from 6 projects with consistent and comparable questions (n=1316).

recognisable brand, and, above all, being seen as a chance to have fun, can drive student participation.

1.6 What next?

The SGF projects have secured funding and resources to enable the continuation of their work in a number of ways, including:

- Securing funding from parent institutions;
- Securing further grant funding;
- Utilising income from enterprise projects;
- Creating staff positions and student leadership roles;
- Embedding activity with existing students' union functions;
- Scaling and replicating projects in new institutions and settings.

Whilst no dedicated staff at NUS will be in place to provide in-depth support, NUS will continue to give the projects a national and international platform, disseminating the learning and successes of the projects across the wider student movement. NUS will also draw on the learning, and adapt and innovate existing sustainability work to lead centrally and translate this into projects delivered across the UK.

Introduction to the fund, the SGF projects and this report

2. Introduction to the fund, the SGF projects and this report

2.1 Introduction to SGF

The Students' Green Fund provided students' unions with the funding to develop transformative, student-led sustainability projects with real impact and legacy. Using £5 million of Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) funding, NUS has helped 26 students' unions from across England to develop 25 ambitious greening projects, leading to step changes in student engagement across higher education.

With student leadership at the heart of all 25 projects, the fund has supported initiatives, ranging from improving the efficiency of student homes, to creating growing spaces on campuses; from up-cycling cafés, to developing sustainable transport for disabled students.

Embedding sustainability into the core purpose of higher education, Students' Green Fund aims to empower cohort after cohort of graduates to leave their time in education as part of the solution to our environmental challenges.













Through holistic approaches like embedding sustainability in the curriculum and developing widespread behaviour change, Students' Green Fund aimed to turn students' unions into hubs of sustainability at the heart of their wider communities, and help students to adopt pro-environmental habits that last far beyond their time in education. The key themes of the fund are: student participation, partnership, impact and legacy.

2.2 The funded projects

The 25 projects covered a vast array of subjects, using an equally extensive range of activities to meet their goals.








The table below outlines the overarching aims of each project, examples of the approaches used to achieve this, and classification according to the focus of their activities as outlined below. A more detailed summary of each project, along with their key achievements over the course of the fund can be found in appendix 1.








Figure 1 | Key to project activities³









	Food		Health and wellbeing
	Waste		Landlords / Private rented sector
	Energy		Business
	Biodiversity		Fashion
	Transport		Learning: Sustainability life skills
	Water		Learning: Employability skills




³ All logos sourced from The Noun Project (<https://thenounproject.com/>): Food [Ava Rowell], Waste [Elad Izak], Energy [Simple Designs], Biodiversity [Mark Caron], Water [Edward Boatman], Health and wellbeing [Molly Bramlet], Landlords [Nicholas Menghini], Business [Darin S], Fashion [Jean-Phillipe Cabaroc], Learning: Sustainability life skills [Healthcare Symbols Collection], Learning: Employability skills [Gao]

Figure 2 | The SGF projects

Project	Aim	Example approach
Bedfordshire Green Hub 	Raising awareness in students and the local community, and increasing pro-environmental behaviours and skills in students. Creating a zero-waste culture on campus, a student-led project fund for environmental projects and greening up the curriculum.	An inflatable Pop Up Green Pod was designed and created to be used for promotions at events, both on campus and in the community, and is available for community organisations to borrow free of charge.
Birmingham City ECO by BCUSU 	Reuse & Recycle Café as a focal point to educate communities on various sustainability themed initiatives (such as recycling, sustainable travel, cycle training, food growing and healthy living) across the eight campuses.	A flexible ECOFund with a wide remit allowing all to apply, not just those with specific green ideas, including the ECO race car running on sustainable fuel project by engineering students, a film to teach children about mental health, and upcycling wedding dresses.
Bradford Cycling 4 All 	Utilising sports and personal development through cycling, wheelchair sports, gardening, social events and the Disabled Students Forum, as an entry point to sustainable living and behaviours amongst both the disabled and non-disabled student population.	Engineering, digital design and product design students involved in a variety of research projects to design adapted bikes for disabled students.
Brighton Bright 'n' Green 	Teaching students the skills to influence and shape green commerce, be change agents to create sustainable student accommodation, create sustainable transport alternatives and make the students' union an example for green values.	Developing student-led services provided to other students and staff, such as the Bike Co-Op, empowering students to lead their own learning and implementation of the co-operative.
Bristol UBU Get Green 	Embedding sustainability through students: gaining knowledge through Education for Sustainable Development, taking action in energy and recycling projects, engagement with other students, and using initiative to create student-led sustainable projects.	Experimenting with embedding sustainability into the curriculum, with students taking the lead; an inaugural student conference, 'A Students' Guide to Sustainability', had 57 attendees and expectations to run again next year.
City University Green Challenge 	An institution-wide campaign, giving teams of students/staff and academics an opportunity to obtain funding for collaborative sustainability projects.	Sustainability ideas pitched in front of a student panel, judged against the criteria of viability and potential impact. Once approved, teams have to gain student pledges on the Green Dragons website in order to get their funding.
Cumbria Greener Minds 	Generating a large-scale behaviour change at the university, and to educate and raise awareness of the need for students to adopt sustainable behaviours.	Engaging staff and students through an online module 'A Day in Your Life', following the average daily routine, giving hints and tips on how individuals can make small changes to their daily actions to make their routines more sustainable.
Exeter	Bridging the gap between student action and academic research, by	Giving students the same funding opportunity, and also giving project

Students' Green Unit 	creating a student-led sustainability unit through which students, mentored by staff and supported by interns, could deliver sustainability projects across the campuses and in the community.	leaders complete control of their projects; allowing for a complete learning experience.
FXU Green Living Project 	Focusing on energy and waste to reduce emissions from accommodation and campus buildings, and to save valuable resources by cutting down waste sent to landfill, aiming to have a lasting impact on the way the campuses operate.	The FXU New Currency (FXUNC) local currency token has seen almost £12,000 spent on campus outlets and local stores; waste saving initiatives have actively engaged students to be involved in local and global environmental issues.
Greener Gloucestershire 	A six strand project looking at delivering sustainability projects across both the university and the county: social enterprise, Green Impact business, partnerships, Global Athletes, Green Retail and Big Green Gap Year.	Projects with national rollout potential: two in-house social enterprises, Global Athletes, 'The Little Green Shop' (bring and buy shop) and the Greener Gloucestershire Festival for students and community.
Greenwich Sustainability Hub 	A hub for Greenwich and the surrounding area, offering activities, education & training, best practice and employability skills to all Greenwich students, students at other education institutions in the area, and the wider community.	Creating new ties between the students' union and local community. Delivering Green Impact off-campus, within museums and local organisations, with the schools outreach and workshop programme, and Fossil Free Greenwich.
Lancaster Edible Campus 	Turning Lancaster University into an edible campus by creating 20 new growing sites, ranging from pick your own to raised beds, where students grow food for their own kitchens.	Edible Campus project as a resource for academics to use the space for research and teaching, students to volunteer, host guests for lunch and engage local schools.
Leeds Green Exchange 	To mainstream sustainability in Leeds by inspiring students to generate transformational ideas, encouraging entrepreneurship, and giving students the resource and support to effect change.	Working with other further and higher education institutions across Leeds on the student-led fund allowed cross city partnerships to be developed in new ways.
Leicester Hungry for Change 	Improving the availability and accessibility of sustainable and ethically procured foods to students, through the creation of a new food network and a local, sustainable, on-campus "grow your own scheme".	Taking a practical approach to sustainability, not just teaching it, with students leading on the project and learning to make sustainable choices.
Liverpool	Initiate a step change in student engagement in sustainability issues,	Strands were developed and implemented around the core themes of

Green Guild 	<p>in particular education and skills for sustainable development, with the promotion of the Green Guild Project across the university and community.</p>	<p>Education for Sustainable Development, engagement and community outreach.</p>
Newcastle Guerrilla Gardeners 	<p>Seven inter-linked sustainability projects, all promoting students into leadership roles, and generating thousands of volunteering opportunities to develop students' skills, experience and pro-environmental behaviour.</p>	<p>Capturing students' interest through growing a wide variety of fruit and vegetables using different growing techniques, and engaging those not generally interested in 'green' issues with Stu Brew.</p>
Northampton Planet Too 	<p>Combining volunteering and campaigning with social enterprise and employability to engage students in leading change. It also targets private and community student housing, aiming to reduce unnecessary energy consumption.</p>	<p>Incentivising landlords to participate with free smart meters, to have a big impact on energy reduction in off campus properties, and embedding sustainability principles in the curriculum; with the potential to have a huge impact campus-wide for years to come.</p>
Roehampton Growhampton 	<p>Creating an edible campus and sustainability hub, supporting health and wellbeing, and working in partnership with the local community.</p>	<p>Using up-cycled materials to build The Hive Café, and a focus on barista style coffee to tap into the popular café culture (and generating an interest in sustainability amongst people that wouldn't usually engage).</p>
Sheffield Green Impact Student Homes 	<p>Engaging landlords to make structural changes to their properties and to provide information to tenants to support them to be sustainable, and at the same time encouraging students to take actions to make their properties warmer, cheaper-to-run and more sustainable.</p>	<p>By taking part in the property accreditation scheme, landlords were able to gain competitive advantage in an over-saturated market.</p>
Sheffield on a Plate 	<p>A partnership between the three main further and higher education institutions in Sheffield, plus two local charities, coming together to engage thousands of students with the issues of food sustainability and food poverty.</p>	<p>Large scale events, involving all partners, saw students involved and connected to the idea of food sustainability, inspiring people to take a variety of actions on food waste and poverty.</p>
Southampton BEES 	<p>Business Ethics and Environment Students (BEES) aimed to enhance business ethics and environmental practices of local organisations through student-led audits and solutions.</p>	<p>Creation of holistic auditing tool and bespoke interventions for local businesses, the organisation staff then choosing what is most appropriate to them to implement, based on determining benefits.</p>
Staffordshire GreenPad 	<p>Creating sustainable, good quality student accommodation, and teaching students how to live sustainably in their everyday lives, by environmentally auditing local student homes and encouraging landlords to make their properties more energy efficient.</p>	<p>Relating cold winters and expensive bills to broader energy saving behaviours, which opened up conversations about living sustainably, which all students could relate to. Emphasising how it is possible to live sustainably without effort, and the money saving bonus, helping to engage students.</p>
UCLan	<p>Building on the university and SU strengths: proven academic</p>	<p>Consulting with students about what sustainability focused changes</p>

Green Ladder 	structures, investment in the Opportunity Centre, community volunteering and recognition of student development.	they wanted to make on campus, providing bursaries for them to make the changes, and working in partnership with the students' union on student engagement.
Wigan and Leigh Smart Green Scheme 	Creating mechanisms for the student voice and building student engagement through campaigns, events and student-led projects, which aimed to raise awareness of sustainability and to promote pro-environmental behaviours.	Activities and campaigns as conversation starters about the environment, and used to instil a strong sense of what social justice means in society but also what it means to individuals.
Energize Worcester 	Encouraging behaviour change around energy use through special software and house-specific information, with student energy assessors carrying out home visits to encourage peer to peer change.	Tackling poor energy efficiency through competition on a bespoke student facing software platform, regular incentives and easy to understand reports on energy saving tailored to individual properties.

2.3 Approach to evaluation

Evaluation formed an integral part of SGF. With one of the key themes of the fund being 'impact', research programmes operated at both fund and individual project levels, with the aim of gathering evidence on the extent to which the fund has:

- Initiated a step change in student engagement in sustainability issues
- Enabled students to become meaningful agents for change on sustainability issues
- Ensured sustainability remains an institutional priority within the sector
- Put English higher education on the map for its sustainability efforts.

Alongside these overarching objectives, evaluation activities also sought to understand:

- What impact have SGF projects had on changing the attitudes and behaviours of their participants, volunteers and partners for sustainability?
- What wider impact have SGF projects had on their participants, volunteers and partners (e.g. skills and personal development)?
- Which kinds of projects and models are successful at delivering behaviour change on sustainable consumption?
- What are the lessons from SGF about critical success factors and barriers involved in delivering effective sustainability engagement projects in higher and further education settings?

SGF projects were supported throughout the application process, and also on being awarded funding, to complete a monitoring and evaluation plan conducted throughout the two years of funding. NUS also provided advice and guidance for projects on monitoring and evaluation throughout the duration of the funding. Reflecting the diverse nature of project activities, an array of quantitative and qualitative techniques were used. Where possible, projects were advised to use standardised resources to enable comparability between projects, and also to build up a fund-wide evidence base.



Although carbon reduction was not the main focus of the Students' Green Fund projects (the central aims of the fund being centred around engaging and empowering student leaders on sustainability), we have monitored the carbon savings associated with the project activities throughout the two years. In year two of the fund, *Energise* carbon consultancy were commissioned to support on the reporting given the complexity of estimating some of the scope three carbon reductions resulting from the 25 projects. The assessed carbon impact from the project is estimated at 4,608.6 tCO₂e over the two years of the project. Many of the savings relate to reported changes from students, in particular behaviours or actions, and therefore the final figure is an estimate. The full report on carbon savings associated with the projects from *Energise* can be found in appendix 3.

Sources: In the main part, this report draws on evidence provided by the SGF projects, through brief monthly progress updates and more in-depth quarterly reflective reports. The SGF projects also provided an in-depth evaluation report at the end of the funding period.

Projects also submitted data collected through survey research, to allow for compilation to build a national picture of attitudes and behaviours linked to sustainability. All projects completed a baseline and follow-up survey, capturing self-reported changes in attitudes and behaviours. This is supported by various other 'soft' and 'hard' data sources, including focus groups, interviews, skills audits, in-depth case studies and meter readings.

Limitations: Throughout the fund, projects have been faced with capturing data on changes that are often difficult to measure. For example, in energy-saving projects data collection is often hampered by metering arrangements or reliance on participants submitting meter readings. Similarly, some changes are, by their nature, difficult to measure, for example, where projects were aiming to build capacity or influence stakeholders. As a result, most projects have measured their impacts using self-reported data (e.g. through surveys, interviews and focus groups) rather than through monitoring actual changes in pro-sustainability behaviour (e.g. purchases, meter readings). It is also worth bearing in mind that change is often a slow process, for example, within an institution, curriculum reviews typically take place every 3-5 years. Therefore the SGF projects, operating for just two years, are unlikely to have been able to influence change in this area 'officially' (though this does depend on individual institutional timetables). Based on this, it could be said that much of the impact that stems from SGF is still to come.

Despite the strong focus on evaluation and capturing data on impacts coupled with ongoing support throughout the fund, data captured by projects varies in its strength and robustness. In some cases, projects were limited by access to their audiences at one or both points of research (e.g. restrictions imposed on circulating surveys leading to low response rates and samples). Although all projects had access to an evaluation handbook and templates, along with ongoing advice and support from NUS, some projects were more successful at engaging staff and student interns/volunteers with existing expertise in research and evaluation to assist in these areas. There is the potential that successes are overstated by projects in attempts to demonstrate impacts, however, strong guidance has been issued that impact claims should be substantiated through monitoring and evaluation evidence.

Outputs

3. Outputs

This chapter is focused on the activities that the SGF projects have delivered over the course of two years of funding, and includes events, services, communications and staff and internship roles. It also looks at the reach of the project in terms of the types of audiences engaged and the extent of engagement.

3.1 Scale of project outputs

The 25 projects have demonstrated a considerable array of activities over the two years of funding. Given the diversity of activity, it is difficult to generalise, but overall SGF has supported the following achievements:

- The involvement of at least 121,738 students – and probably far more;
- The involvement of at least 7,670 staff – and probably far more;
- The creation of 42 full time and 17 part time staff positions;
- The creation of at least 335 paid student positions e.g. interns;
- The involvement of at least 5,500 in-depth volunteers;
- The running of at least 100 workshops and training courses;
- The delivery of approximately 1,700 audits of businesses, homes, schools and other organisations;
- The design of 26 websites and social media campaigns (including NUS central efforts) that have received hundreds of thousands of visitors and tens of thousands of followers;
- The creation of a multitude of toolkits and other resources;
- The development of infrastructure (e.g. waste services, cafes, markets);
- The formation of hundreds of partnerships with businesses, local authorities and third sector groups;
- The funding of 193 student-led projects;
- The development of 10 student-led social enterprises;
- The creation of a new currency token for local business, with environmental and ethical credentials, being used to the value of £12,000;
- The organisation of at least 500 events; and
- The generation of local and national media coverage.

3.2 What outputs have been delivered?

The table below outlines some examples of outputs delivered by the SGF projects as described in their evaluation reports. This is far from a comprehensive list, but gives a flavour of the breadth and scale of project activity over the two years of funding.

Figure 3 | Example SGF project outputs

SGF project	Example outputs
Bedfordshire Green Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Run 148 events, for example, the popular smoothie bikes to engage students in energy-saving• Developed a growing site at the Putteridge Bury campus• Run several cycle days, a cycling breakfast and Dr. Bike sessions
Birmingham City ECO by BCUSU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 150 people attended an evening of story, music, food, talks and activities aimed at reconnecting with nature, run by BCU, and Edible Eastside at a Digbeth First Friday community event• Student volunteers worked with Birmingham Made Me (a design expo) on a six week training programme developing two projects; 'Renew', upcycling old furniture, and 'Bin It To Win It', turning coffee cups into lottery tickets• Diverted 7.3 tonnes from landfill by collecting from students and University staff members
Bradford Cycling 4 All	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In June 2015, the C4A project hosted an inclusive coast to coast bike ride specifically for disabled students• Supported 11 research projects, all founded on improving accessibility to sustainable transport for disabled students• Developed the first accessible community garden in a UK university
Brighton Bright 'n' Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bright 'n' Green held an event in partnership with the university and local community groups, presenting talks from Caroline Lucas MP, amongst others, to discuss what could be done locally to contribute to 'Zero Carbon Britain'• Trained eight students as bicycle mechanics• Ten GreenSkills enterprise challenges completed, from community volunteer roles to renewable energy research
Bristol UBU Get Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Held a student sustainability research conference, highlighting student work on sustainability taking place in the university, with 57 attendees• Bristol Big Give diverted 20 tonnes of reusable waste from landfill, generating over £200,000 (in year one) for local and national charities• Monthly Engage Café, with 40 students, aimed at learning more about sustainability for those who couldn't commit to regular volunteering
City University Green Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Created a pledge-based 'crowd funder' website to engage the university community in proposals for new projects• Achieved 3,018 website pledges from the student population in support of student-led project ideas, a requirement of accessing funding• 28 projects presented to the Green Dragons panel
Cumbria Greener Minds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designed an online learning module, 'A Day in Your Life', which has been accessed by 210 students and staff• Developed four growing sites• Created the Eco Warrior Schools project, where student volunteers deliver sustainability workshops to local primary schools
Exeter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funded and supported 16 student-led projects, covering an array of issues; from sustainability of fish sourcing, to raising the profile of cutting-edge climate change research within the university

Students' Green Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created a dedicated, branded space for the project within the Activities and Volunteering floor of the students' union building Organised a Students' Green Unit conference, which is to become an annual event
FXU Green Living Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered a compost collection scheme to 207 student kitchens with around 1642 students participating in the scheme 61 home energy assessments completed, following the training of 24 students as home energy assessors £11,561 of FXU New Currency spent in participating stores
Greener Gloucestershire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered a 're-use your water bottle' campaign to sports students, involving distribution of approximately 700 re-usable water bottles to reduce the purchase of disposable bottled water. This was accompanied by a social media campaign with sports students submitting photos of themselves using their water bottles Sold 500 jars of Cheltenham Chilli Company chutney; grown, processed, sold and marketed by a student enterprise team Held the Greener Gloucestershire Festival; bringing together students, community and green organisations to celebrate sustainability
Greenwich Sustainability Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnered with three local organisations to deliver Green Impact Enterprise, engaging over 100 staff across 20 teams Trained 44 students as Green Impact auditors Held pro-environmental events across all campuses, including Fairtrade Wine and Cheese Night, Sustainability Show and Energy, Health and Wellbeing, Food and Ethical Finance Forums
Lancaster Edible Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Converted three further acres to edible growing spaces on campus Fortnightly farmers market run by volunteers and student staff Development of pick your own areas and raised beds, that students take ownership of
Leeds Green Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded and supported 29 student-led projects, involving 950 volunteers Grew and sold 278kg of organic salad to local businesses Developed and ran 23 sustainable living education sessions
Leicester Hungry for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed five growing sites, with students and staff logging 2276 volunteer hours through set up and maintenance 66 trees planted in total with the help of Natalie Bennett from the Green Party H4C group became an official society with six committee members and a management team
Liverpool Green Guild	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded and supported ten student-led projects Recruited ten students to support sustainability activity and events in 20 schools Student Switch Off savings of 558 tonnes of CO2 over two years
Newcastle Guerrilla Gardeners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 Guerrilla Gardening activities, engaging 233 volunteers and local residents to transform areas of waste land into productive growing spaces Funding of 12 sustainability projects by the Green Grants Fund – managed by a student grants panel Setting up Stu Brew; Europe's first student-run microbrewery enterprise
Northampton Planet Too	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47 properties accredited during the Green House award pilot 141 Sustainability Changemakers recruited and trained over two years



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Sustainability Grants and Awards given to 46 students
Roehampton Growhampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ran volunteer harvest sessions, where students picked and packed leafy greens from the growing site, with almost 500kg being harvested over the two years• Created a weekly market, selling the produce grown on campus, and providing an outlet for local suppliers• Raised £20,000 through Crowdfunder to increase capacity at the Hive Café
Sheffield Green Impact Student Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed a workbook for students to take action on sustainability in private rented accommodation• 132 households taken part in audits• 104 students trained in Sustainability Skills sessions• Setting up the Sustainability Library, where students and staff can borrow books, DVDs, gardening tools and energy monitors
Sheffield on a Plate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivered 'The Big Stew' to highlight food waste and food poverty in the UK and encourage people to take action• Ran two Sustainable Student Masterchef competitions• Recruited students to a new "Save Our Sandwiches" project, saving over 3,500 surplus food items from catering outlets across the two campuses, and passing them on to homeless shelters• Collected over 9000 items from food drives for local food banks; the equivalent of over 8000 meals
Southampton BEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Created a toolkit to engage local businesses in sustainability• Delivered 24 audits to 24 local businesses, resulting in 268 recommendations• Worked with NUS to increase participation in Blackout; with 17 universities taking part over the two years
Staffordshire GreenPad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Created a sustainability-based landlord accreditation scheme• Received handover from the University to run all private house listings across both campuses• Designed the GreenPad home tenant pack, including energy monitors to track energy use
UCLan Green Ladder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ran 109 events on a variety of subjects, including a visit to LUSH Cosmetics• Set up and established the Sustainable Development Curriculum Mapping Process• Established the Eco English programme, working with 218 International Language students across the summer break
Wigan and Leigh Smart Green Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported four curriculum-based sustainability projects, seeing students and staff working together• Held two 'Five Aid' events, providing over 500 students and staff with a lunch made from food that would have otherwise been thrown away• Developed a college garden at the Wigan Campus, with the design and construction led by students• Trained 168 course representatives, which included a focus on sustainability within the curriculum
Energize Worcester	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trained 20 auditors and delivered 515 audits in student homes• Five students recruited and trained as professional Energy Advocates to facilitate households to adopt appropriate energy behaviours through a peer to peer format• Project rolled out to the University of Birmingham in partnership with Birmingham Guild of Students

3.3 Fund and project reach

Each project included a reach target within their project plans and proposals, meaning that a key feature of projects' monitoring activity has been the tracking of their engagement with their audiences. These individual project targets were designed to feed into the overarching reach targets for the fund overall.

Figure 4 provides evidence on the best estimate available for the reach of the fund, though for reasons outlined below this is likely to underestimate the total reach of the fund.

Figure 4 | Fund and project reach

Fund target	Fund achievement	Examples
50,000 students engaged across the funded projects over the two years	At least 121,738 students engaged at some level with SGF project activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through a range of events and activities, Bedfordshire's Green Hub have engaged with 4049 students at some level Over 245 volunteers have engaged with Cumbria's Greener Minds opportunities e.g. developing the project growing spaces Leicester's Hungry for Change project have recorded 2276 volunteer hours over two years
5,000 staff engaged across the funded projects over the two years	At least 7,670 staff engaged at some level with SGF project activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exeter's Students' Green Unit engaged 100 academic and professional service staff as project sponsors and mentors for student-led projects BCU's EcoFund has engaged with 32 members of staff, to incorporate sustainability into their work, working across a diverse array of teams
100% of English higher education students' unions engage with the fund	At least 130 institutions have engaged with the SGF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 167 expressions of interest from 130 students' unions 120 applications received from 105 students' unions 59% (n=99) of English NUS member students' union staff and officers surveyed in November 2014 indicated being aware of SGF to some extent Presentations made on the key outcomes from SGF at the end of year one at NUS' flagship event for members – Students' Unions 2014 - attended by 711 staff and officers SGF projects also featured in workshops during NUS' 'NUS Local' series of events running during 2014-15 15 webinars run; engaging participants from students' unions and institutions

125,000 unique page views across the funded projects over the two years	370,239 ⁴ unique page views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NUS' bespoke microsite for SGF⁵ accumulated over 45,000 unique page views from 12,000 individual users The Sheffield on a Plate project (run in partnership between Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam and Sheffield College students' unions) achieved approx. 22,000 unique page views
20,000 social media followers of funded projects over the two years	21,862 new social media followers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffordshire's GreenPad has secured 596 Facebook fans UCLan's Green Ladder project has reached 889 Twitter followers Bristol Get Green has amassed 1142 Facebook fans

Difficulties estimating reach: The figures available do not consistently take into account the quality or depth of the contact. For example, public events may have reached many people for a one-off encounter with the project, while other activities which achieved apparently small reach had continuing contact with their target audiences.

On a national scale, internal changes to NUS' tracking of engagement with its member students' unions has meant it has not been possible to assess awareness of SGF beyond the mid-point of the fund in November 2014.

Social media

For several students' unions with a pre-existing, active sustainability account, or access to their union's main social media accounts, it was deemed sensible to utilise ready-engaged audiences, rather than building new audiences from scratch. Where existing students' union accounts were used, this had the added bonus of going beyond the 'usual suspects' and reaching new audiences not already predisposed towards sustainability matters. This approach does mean, however, that it is impossible to attribute any specific numbers of *new* followers of a students' union to its Students' Green Fund project, as described by the target. Therefore it is likely that social media reach is in fact well beyond the figures cited above. Additionally, the capabilities of social media platforms give each post or Tweet an exponential character, with users and followers able to re-post news items to their own audiences. Quantifying this extended reach is extremely difficult. Illustrative examples include:

- By utilising their students' union's existing social media channels, Leeds Green Exchange reached an average of 8,648 people per post – far beyond the reach of most bespoke accounts.
- Exeter's Students' Green Unit accumulated 346,000 retweets over the course of their two years, boosting the impressions of their posts immeasurably.
- Many projects used platforms beyond Facebook and Twitter, such as Lancaster whose vlog accumulated over 350 views over its course.

⁴ This figure includes central NUS website page views.

⁵ <http://www.studentsgreenfund.org.uk/>

Outcomes and impact

4. Outcomes and impact

SGF has four overarching objectives, aimed at creating a continued momentum towards improving engagement with, and action for, sustainability within the higher education sector, driven by students. The objectives are as follows:

SGF OBJECTIVES

- *Initiated a step change in student engagement in sustainability issues*
- *Enabled students to become meaningful agents for change on sustainability issues*
- *Ensured sustainability remains an institutional priority within the sector*
- *Put English higher education on the map for its sustainability efforts.*

This section of this report considers the progress towards these targets, and achievements in these areas. Subsequently, specific outcomes and impacts across the 25 projects are considered in the following areas:

- Pro-sustainability attitudes and behaviours
- Integration of sustainability into the curriculum (education for sustainable development)
- Employability
- Personal development and university life
- Institutional relationships and commitment

4.1 Objective: Initiating a step change in student engagement in sustainability issues

Over the two years at least 121,738 students have engaged with the 25 SGF projects and their activities. Additionally, 335 paid student staff positions and 10 student officer positions have also been created as a direct result of SGF activity in participating students' unions.



Whilst there is little precise data on the level of existing engagement with sustainability prior to participating in SGF project activities, anecdotal evidence from project leads provide examples of reaching greater numbers of students.

"The best way to summarise the step change that has happened at Lancaster is that previous to Edible Campus the pro-environmental activities of the union were something that involved a relatively small group of students who already cared about these activities. We now have more than 1500 people involved who participate for all sorts of reasons: exercise, community, skills, international integration, fresh air, mental health, career development, fun and of course the food itself." **Lancaster**

"The numbers of students engaging in sustainability action on campus rose from 1,500 max per year to well over 5,000 per year." **Sheffield on a Plate**

"Over the two years 4049 students have engaged with us and participated in a pro-environmental action. Prior to the start of the project approximately 100 students (exact figure not known) had participated in sustainable activities organised by Beds SU (namely Go Green Week and Fair Trade events)." **Bedfordshire**

SGF has also contributed to student engagement in sustainability issues in the following ways.

SGF as an initiator of students' union action on sustainability: When looking at the impact of the SGF projects on student engagement in sustainability issues, it's worth considering the difference in starting points for the individual projects. For some, securing funding provided the opportunity for the students' union to engage in action related to sustainability for the first time, providing the first step in a change in engagement.

"Green Dragons was the first project to offer so many opportunities to City students/staff/academics to engage with sustainability whilst increasing their confidence, environmental awareness and transferable skills such as leadership, entrepreneurship and to increase employability." **City**



City Green Challenge - Green Dragons

"For many years Brighton Students' Union had not been meaningfully engaging in sustainability as an area of action prior to the Bright 'n' Green project, and so using the project as a way to kickstart a number of projects in a variety of areas and with a variety of methods has noticeably increased the SU's interest in working on environmentally-related projects." **Brighton**

SGF mainstreaming sustainability activities: Additionally, in an important step towards reaching the tipping point necessary to mainstream sustainability, projects also commonly report engaging students who would not define themselves as being interested in the concept. This is in part due to the tactics used by the projects to promote their work – focusing on wider benefits to initially hook students' interest, and then developing their interest from there.

"Our Eco-Warrior Schools project and workshops were based on a sustainability theme; however the larger percentage of those getting involved were interested in the teaching and working with children aspect of the project i.e. aspects that related to their future career goals. By getting involved in Eco-Warrior Schools student volunteers, largely Student teachers, were able to gain new knowledge in sustainability, project management and workshop delivery from our Greener Minds team and NUS that they are able to take forward into their future job roles and to influence others- they also gained essential work experience." **Cumbria**



Leicester Hungry For Change -
The Great British Food Debate

"One particular architecture student attended the Fork and Dig It volunteer day because it was the university's volunteer week. He had wanted to participate in the week but was not environmentally motivated or proactive. He expressed that he neither was unaware of the aims of the day nor knew what to expect from it. He had not been out in rural surroundings since childhood and absolutely loved it. He went on to volunteer regularly at the site in his spare time." **Brighton**

There is also evidence of projects linking their work to other groups and societies, again broadening reach and developing a different concept of the kinds of students that are involved in sustainability activities on campus.

"The social enterprise opportunities have engaged an even wider audience of different people e.g. ENACTUS and Baking Society." **Leicester**

SGF engaging student leadership: One project particularly noted the increased engagement with sustainability amongst student leadership candidates at the students' union. Securing support from leadership is seen as vital to ensuring continued engagement into the future. Most projects have engaged with their students' union's student leadership in order to drive support and further engagement from across the institution.

"The student officer team of 2014-15 has been very supportive of our SGF work and have championed our work. The impact of this has been fascinating and has caused a change in how students view the SU Development Officer role in particular. Five of the six students who ran for the role included sustainability in their manifestos highlighting the change in student engagement in sustainability issues." **Northampton**

"Working with Ben Walters, who was the first paid student officer ever at Sheffield College in 2014/15, has been mutually beneficial, with Ben benefitting from this broad-reaching project as one of his focuses, and us benefitting from Ben's skills and determination... which were needed when it came to the challenges of the grow site! We fully expect to see him as a future leader." **Sheffield on a Plate**

Case Study | Employability at Southampton



The BEES programme provides an opportunity for students to gain practical experience to complement their university degree. BEES audits and intervention plans in local businesses provided an opportunity for volunteers to enter a challenging environment within the safety of the programme and with the support of experienced staff. BEES volunteers and interns have demonstrated significant knowledge and skills development across all areas self-evaluated in the BEES Skills Tracker, including sustainability knowledge, analytical thinking, communication, delivering sustainability improvement, and leading change. This is valuable in preparing Southampton students for entering the workplace. BEES volunteers highlighted that the programme allowed them to enter a new community and make friends, learn about sustainability and business legislations and gain auditing experience.

4.2 Objective: Enabling students to become meaningful agents for change on sustainability issues

Equipping students with the capacity to take the lead on sustainability agendas has been a key focus across the SGF projects, with activities designed to empower students to define, shape and lead work. These abilities have been developed across multiple contexts, both within and beyond institutions.

SGF creating opportunities for students to develop skills for change: Opportunities for developing skills, both linked to sustainability and more generally, have featured as an element of most SGF projects. These opportunities improve the capacity and capability of students to take action on sustainability. This applies both during their time in education and beyond.

"Being more politically open minded and also being able to think one way, listen to others and take that on board and think about it. I've also gained more skills. And I've learned more around how I could be more environmentally friendly...Yeah, I'm more open minded around sustainability in home, and in my classroom. Instead of chucking anything in any bin, I actually look if it's recyclable and I turn the lights off more. And I vote! Basically, everything I do now is around the different lessons I've learned by being involved with the students' union." **Student participant, Wigan**

"...my upcoming employment is actually within the University, so I'll be promoting Green Impact within my new team! Just as the module has changed my daily conduct for the better, I'm going to take things I learned during the Green Impact project and put them into practice during future work placements" **Volunteer, Cumbria**

For further details on the skills participants have gained through participation in SGF project activities, both transferable and sustainability specific, see section 4.2 and 4.8.

Projects which included a student-led funding element in particular, report that the students involved have become empowered and developed a greater sense of agency as a result of the process of running their own project 'for real' rather than through course commitments.



"By running the Student Fund and focusing a key strand of the project on empowering students and, importantly, giving them resource to direct their own campaigns and initiatives, we have developed a model that shows that student engagement is more than just telling students about sustainability or providing ready-made opportunities. By empowering students to define the issues and develop solutions to them we have helped to develop an ethos of student leadership around the sustainability agenda, and the outputs of the Student Fund projects show that this has been successful." **Leeds**

"Students taking leadership of new projects on campus - Sheffield Student Market Ltd is a company limited by guarantee, owned by its student directors. The beekeeping society now has student responsibility for multiple hives. The Save our Sandwiches groups have

*blossomed in six short months from an idea through to 3,500+ items rescued and a growing reputation among staff for reliability and friendliness.” **Sheffield on a Plate***

SGF developing a student voice on sustainability within institutions: The presence of SGF projects working on sustainability has, in some institutions, given the student population a recognised voice on sustainability issues. Projects describe their parent institutions as now actively seeking student opinion on sustainability issues, as a result of the presence of the SGF project.

*“Recently the University has come to us to consult students to find their attitudes to university divestment from fossil fuels. It is highly unlikely this conversation would have taken place without the Greener Gloucestershire project.” **Gloucestershire***

Some projects, for example UCLan and Bedfordshire, also report the creation of new student leadership roles within the students’ union, focused specifically on sustainability. These roles have been created as a direct result of the presence of their SGF projects within the union.

Case Study | Community partnership at Cumbria



The University of Cumbria adapted their project as the project progressed, engaging with local schools to better fit the skills and interest areas of their student’s academic disciplines – particularly appealing to the large number of students studying on Primary and Secondary Education and Child Studies. Eco Warrior Schools trains student volunteers to design research and deliver workshops themed on sustainability topics to children in Primary schools. The project created positive partnerships with schools in the local community which is arranged to continue next academic year, “I think it was a great enrichment experience for the children which linked very well with what we learn in science at this time of year” Bowerham Primary School.

SGF influencing change in local communities:

A number of projects focused their activities on working within their local community, for example training students to audit businesses and privately rented accommodation, or working with local schools; expanding the potential for students to effect change into new contexts.

“The BEES training and audit programme has provided depth, enabling students to be agents of change, leading in transforming sustainable business practice across the city and as sustainability-literate graduates entering the workplace. This complements a programme of one-off sustainability volunteering events and campaigns by providing an opportunity for ongoing involvement and skills development.”
Southampton

“The project hired ten students from University of Worcester and University of Birmingham to be trained as professional energy advisors and deliver their knowledge and expertise into their peer groups; a further 15 students in University of Birmingham have been recruited as Energy Assessors to support a much wider operation by identifying the general student housing energy profile in Birmingham city; and also a group of creative art, journalism students have been recruited to help with project digital communication. Their passion and willingness to change would become powerful agents to encourage more students to be aware of energy issues and make change. Some

students, who graduated this year have been recruited by other companies, according to their feedback, the experiences from this project have made them determined to carry out responsibilities to make a difference in their work places.” Worcester

4.3 Objective: Ensuring sustainability remains an institutional priority within the sector

As well as influencing change at an individual level, the SGF projects sought to work in partnership with institutions to emphasise sustainability at an institutional-wide level. This has been achieved through a variety of means, outlined below. Reflections from active volunteers, through survey research, reiterates the importance of institutional action; a third (34%, n=1813 across four of the SGF projects) saying that they have been motivated by an increased understanding of what their university is doing to reduce its impact.

SGF integrating sustainability within systems, processes and events: Action taken by SGF projects includes the creation of ‘infrastructure’ to ensure that sustainability remains on the agenda at institutions and students’ unions. For example, at Bedfordshire, the students’ union has created a sustainability officer position, and the university has introduced a Sustainability Champion award as part of the University of Bedfordshire’s Student Experience Awards issued by the Vice Chancellor.

The ongoing presence of a staff role dedicated to sustainability, following the end of SGF funding, will also ensure sustainability continues as a priority within these students’ unions, and also that they continue to be able to influence change in their institutions and communities.

*“Evidence of sustainability’s increased priority in our institution is the fact that a Sustainability Coordinator post has been created as part of the restructure. More resource has been given to sustainability work, increasing it from 0.4FTE (before SGF) to 0.9FTE. The institutional aim is to expand the scope of sustainability work when opportunities arise.” **Green Impact Student Homes - Sheffield***

*“Meanwhile over at Hallam Union there is a similar story to tell- sustainability is now in the President’s duties, and the creation of the post of Sustainability Graduate Intern has proved a success. The role is now embedded and taking on many new projects, including both student projects and furthering schemes such as Green Impact. The success of the first year of this two-year post has left Hallam Union in a position to push for more budget and resource for sustainability the year after next... and being involved in Sheffield on a Plate has certainly played its part in that success.” **Sheffield on a Plate***

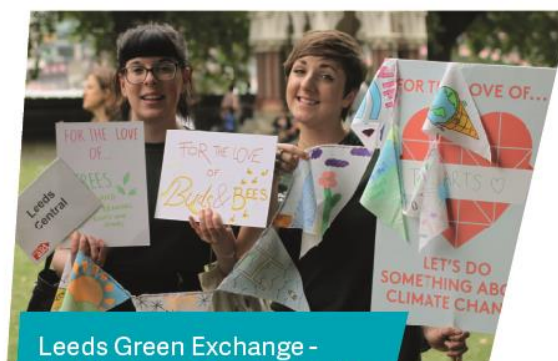


Other projects have contributed to a reframing of the students’ union’s strategic plan to include a focus on sustainability.

*"We have set up an SU sustainability committee – chaired by a current student – and reworked our strategic plan so that every section has to have a consideration for sustainability." **Gloucestershire***

*"LUU's 2014-2018 strategic plan now lists sustainability as a priority." **Leeds***

Other examples of integrating sustainability into ongoing processes includes developing course rep training to include information on sustainability. The course rep system is an important way of students reflecting their views and experiences on courses. Raising the profile of sustainability within this audience has the continuing potential to influence coverage of sustainability within courses.



Leeds Green Exchange -
For The Love Of ... Campaign

*"The Student Union has integrated sustainability training into the course rep training programme, ensuring the message is being disseminated into the different course areas. The sustainability training was successfully delivered to over 300 course reps during 2014/15." **Leicester***

SGF developing and improving partnerships with institutions: SGF projects have consistently sought to engage representatives from their institutions in the work of the project over the two years of funding. Through providing a staff resource devoted to sustainability, students' unions have been able to engage with their institutions in depth, for example, creating and contributing to sustainability committees and strategic reviews. In some instances the projects have influenced the way institutions operate on sustainability issues through these roles.

*"Activities over the last year led to the establishment of a University working group for the implementation of ESD which has met four times and made recommendations on ESD to the Student Experience Committee in May which were received with enthusiasm and approved. Members of the working group are currently engaged in preparing a paper to inform the current strategic review which is being consulted on across the institution." **Liverpool***

*"The SGF project has moved student union activity to a new level, raising the level and profile of student action and also transformed the union. The achievements of our students through SGF support are now one of big stories university leaders tell. It has been instrumental in revolutionising understanding of what our students can achieve. The best £5 million HEFCE ever spent in terms of impact return on investment." **Chris Willmore, Academic Director of Undergraduate Education, University of Bristol***



Greenwich Sustainability Hub
- Bike maintenance

To support the data provided by the SGF projects, NUS completed interviews with a

selection of leaders from parent institutions. Participants included pro vice-chancellors and sustainability leads. From the perspective of these interviewees, there was universal agreement in the benefits the projects had brought to partnership working between the students' union and institution (and beyond).

"There is no other formal project connecting the university, union and external bodies. It has illustrated that the university can work with the students' union, and illustrates that students can take responsibility and are interested in change." **Institutional leader, Greenwich**

"The Cycling 4 All project has changed the way that we view our sporting activities at the University of Bradford. We previously viewed disability sports provision separate to our sports clubs but the project has led to a much more integrated and inclusive sporting programme." **Vice Chancellor, Bradford**

"They have challenged us continually and encouraged students to do the same in a healthy way." **Institutional leader, UCLan**

The interviews with institutional leaders also revealed a change, or confirmation, of how the students' union is viewed within the institution. Through the delivery of an externally funded project, students' union teams have been able to demonstrate their strengths and capacities.

"It has cemented the view that the SU is forward looking, committed to sustainability, capable and competent organisation and doing the right things." **Institutional leader, Staffordshire**

"The SGF project has reinforced the perception that the Guild of Students have the capacity and ability to develop complex projects that assist institutional strategic aims whilst engaging and integrating key stakeholders throughout the process." **Institutional leader, Liverpool**



Alongside the actions and efforts of the SGF projects, it is worth mentioning the levels of support that the projects have received from within their institutions. The support of institution-based teams and departments is frequently cited by SGF projects as being a key factor in the success of their work, providing ongoing support, guidance, encouragement and advocacy.

"The importance of our close and effective working with Facilities Management has been utterly key to the success of the project. FM helped write the original bid. They have sat on our Steering Group meetings and we've been working in partnership with them on Green Week and many other projects. FM's openness, support, guidance and encouragement has been utterly key to the project. Without their advocacy very little would have been achieved. We owe the FM Team a huge amount. They have been there throughout the two years helping to solve issues or to offer advice or new perspectives." **UCLan**

Award-winning SGF projects reinforces the benefits of partnership work, ensures continued support within institutions, and provides credibility: Over the two years of the fund, the cohort of SGF projects have received a number of awards at international, national and local levels. For example, Birmingham City received a Business in the Community Big Tick Award for joint sustainability working within the institution. Similarly, Newcastle have been recognised for the breadth and depth of the sustainability activity achieved by students, through the Vice Chancellors Outstanding Achievement Award. This has led to the provision of £135,000 annually to ensure the continuation of these activities. Wigan and Leigh College also reflect that receiving an award can inspire the institution to engage with sustainability following the end of the funding period.

"National recognition for our work in these areas has inspired managers in participating departments to want to carry on with this work after the project is over." **Wigan and Leigh**

4.4 Objective: Put English higher education on the map for its sustainability efforts

The SGF project as a cohort have raised awareness on student action on sustainability, both within and beyond the higher education sector in England. Centrally organised events, such as the House of Lords reception, held for project staff, student volunteers, institutional leaders and MPs, acted as a seal of approval for the efforts being made to address sustainability in this setting. Further action that has contributed towards this objective includes:



SGF projects raising the profile of student sustainability action through awards:

The SGF projects have secured a number of awards within the higher education sector, for example the Green Gown Awards, which recognise good practice and innovation. However, many projects received awards from wider sectors, and international recognition for their approach and impact. Examples include:



- Bradford's Cycling 4 All was nominated and shortlisted for a Community Stars Award with the Telegraph and Argus. The team also received a Green Gowns award for their accessible garden site
 - Bug Boys – one of Brighton's GreenSkills student enterprise projects - has won an award through Santander's accelerator programme
 - Exeter's Students' Green Unit won an excellence award from the International Sustainable Campus Network for student leadership
 - The Greener Gloucestershire team secured the 'best paper' award at the World Symposium of Sustainable Development at Universities
- Newcastle's sustainable brewery project was shortlisted for the city's Pride of Newcastle Awards

- The Growhampton project at Roehampton won the Soil Association's Organic Eating Out award in 2014, and also received a Green Business award in the borough's business awards scheme
- Sheffield College catering lecturer Neil Taylor won the Professional Association of Catering Education award for environmental sustainability, through the Sheffield on a Plate Masterchef programme
- UCLan's Green Ladder project won an 'It's your neighbourhood' award from the Royal Horticultural Society

One institutional leader reflected on the allocation of SGF funding effectively acting as an award, with the resulting project giving both the university and the students' union credibility in the field of sustainability.



Bradford Cycling 4 All - Coast to Coast event

"I believe that through the SGF the University has become more attractive to prospective students with an interest in sustainability as well as improving the University's and Guild's credibility."
Institutional leader, Liverpool

SGF projects reaching international audiences: Some projects report that they have reached international audiences through a variety of means. Exeter's Students' Green Unit won the International Sustainable Campus Network award in 2014 and the Leeds Green Exchange team also had an

international presence, joining the UK youth delegation at the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in Japan in 2014.

Closer to home, UCLan reached an international audience through their blog, securing followers from 76 countries. The project also ran targeted activities for international students at the university – 218 international language students took part in 'Eco English'; bringing a theme of sustainability to the annual English language summer school. Students had the opportunity to develop skills in sustainability to take away alongside their language skills, but also shared experiences related to sustainability from their home countries (including Angola, Brazil, China, Columbia, Hong Kong, Italy, Korea, Portugal and Spain).



UCLan Green Ladder - The Secret Garden

SGF projects driving sustainability action in their local communities: Through the course of the projects, working within local communities has put the students' union on the map for driving action on sustainability in new and innovative ways.

"Through the collaboration between Sheffield Students' Union and propertywithUS, we have piloted an environmental accreditation scheme for the private rented sector. We have established a methodology that works in a saturated property market to drive landlords to make energy-efficiency and sustainability-related property improvements."

Within the higher education sector, private rented accommodation is often an 'after-thought' as universities tend to focus on their own offer of halls of residences. The fact that we've piloted this and found a scheme that works puts higher education on the map for its sustainability efforts." **Green Impact Student Homes - Sheffield**

SGF media coverage: The media coverage achieved centrally by NUS, and also at an individual project level, has also contributed to developing a reputation for positive action on sustainability amongst higher education institutions in England.

The work of SGF as an overall fund, and the work of individual projects, has been profiled in such places as ITV News, the Daily Mail, the Jellied Eel, and Resurgence & Ecologist as well as innumerable local outlets – many of these going way beyond the 'typical' sustainability outlets - reaching brand new audiences and shifting public perceptions around students and sustainability.



The next section of the report considers the impacts of the SGF projects across some common core themes. Within these themes, the original plan for SGF set out a number of targets, therefore evidence to support achievement of these targets is also provided.

4.5 Impacts on pro-sustainability attitudes and behaviours

As well as achieving change at a sectoral and institutional level, along with providing opportunities for students to lead and drive action on sustainability, SGF projects have also worked to achieve change at an individual level amongst the wider student and staff populations. The business plan for the fund also set out some key targets in this area, as outlined below:

SGF TARGETS

- *An institutional increase in student participation in pro-environmental actions;*
- *An institutional increase in student awareness of sustainability initiatives; and*
- *An increase of between 10-15% adoption of pro-environmental behaviours.*

SGF target: An institutional increase in student participation in pro-environmental actions / Increase of between 10-15% of pro-environmental behaviours:

The main approach to tracking changes in behaviour adopted by the SGF projects, has been through baseline and follow-up surveys. This section considers the changes in pro-sustainability behaviour evidenced in this way, both in general and also according to specific theme (e.g. food related behaviours, energy related behaviours). Where projects have been able to capture hard data, for example energy meter readings, examples are also presented. Additional anecdotal evidence from project leads, and qualitative evidence from participants and volunteers is also provided.

It is worth reiterating the limitations of this approach, outlined in section 2.3. Frequently projects had issues accessing students for research purposes, for example, due to restrictions on the frequency of surveys being promoted within the university. In some cases, respondents were able to access the full student population at baseline, whereas at follow-up access was limited to just project participants, so it is worth bearing in mind that comparisons are not being made like for like. The data does however indicate the kinds of changes that can occur as a result of participation in sustainability projects, and the potential spill over impacts to the wider student population (though the potential for other influences here should also be borne in mind).

Overall reported change

SGF projects were provided with, and encouraged to use, standardised questions across the themes covered by project activities, as well as a range of questions focused on assessing general levels of attitude, knowledge and behaviour related to sustainability and the environment. Included within the resources were the questions which feed into the segmentation model, developed by Defra, which categorises participants according to the strength of their pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours⁶. Figure 5 below outlines the characteristics of each segment.

Figure 5 | Defra pro-environmental segmentation

Segment	Characteristics
Positive greens	I think there will be negative consequences if our society does not act urgently to solve environmental problems. I believe it is just common sense to behave in an environmentally responsible manner - I don't agree with people who say that it's just a fad. I already do a lot to help the environment and would be interested to find out if I can do a bit more.
Sideline supporters	I think we could face major environmental issues in the future, and in general I don't think environmentalists have exaggerated the problems. Unfortunately, in the real world it's really hard to do always the best thing. I might do quite a lot of things that harm the environment but I often don't really have a choice.
Concerned consumers	I think I'm quite environmentally minded, though I could do more. I worry a bit about climate change, but I think some environmentalists are too extreme - especially when they do things like encourage people to stop flying. I'm hopeful and optimistic that technology will help solve environmental problems.
Cautious participants	I think there are major issues with the environment and I would like to do more to help. However, when you look around, most people just do their own thing. I think I'd do more if other people did more. I think the government could do more to help, too.
Waste watchers	Some claims made by environmentalists are exaggerated, and I can often see both sides of the argument with regards to environmental issues. I conserve energy and water and I believe "waste not, want not" sums me up quite well. I'm motivated mostly by the opportunity to save money.
Stalled starters	To be honest, I'm much more concerned with what I'm doing today than something which may happen way off in the future to the environment. If anything extreme is going to happen, I don't see what I could do about it anyway.
Honestly disengaged	I don't think anyone really knows what's going on with the environment. It's not something that worries me or affects me. What I do has very little impact on the planet.

⁶

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69277/pb13574-behaviours-report-080110.pdf

The questions were standardised to allow for comparisons between projects, and to build up a picture across the cohort. It is worth remembering that multiple approaches have been used to promote the surveys, and at varying times within the academic year, which will influence the robustness of the amalgamated data. Again, the data provided should be used as an indicator of change.

Examples of general behavioural change, both across the SGF cohort of projects as a whole and examples at an individual project level, are shown in figure 6 below.

Figure 6 | Examples of general behavioural change

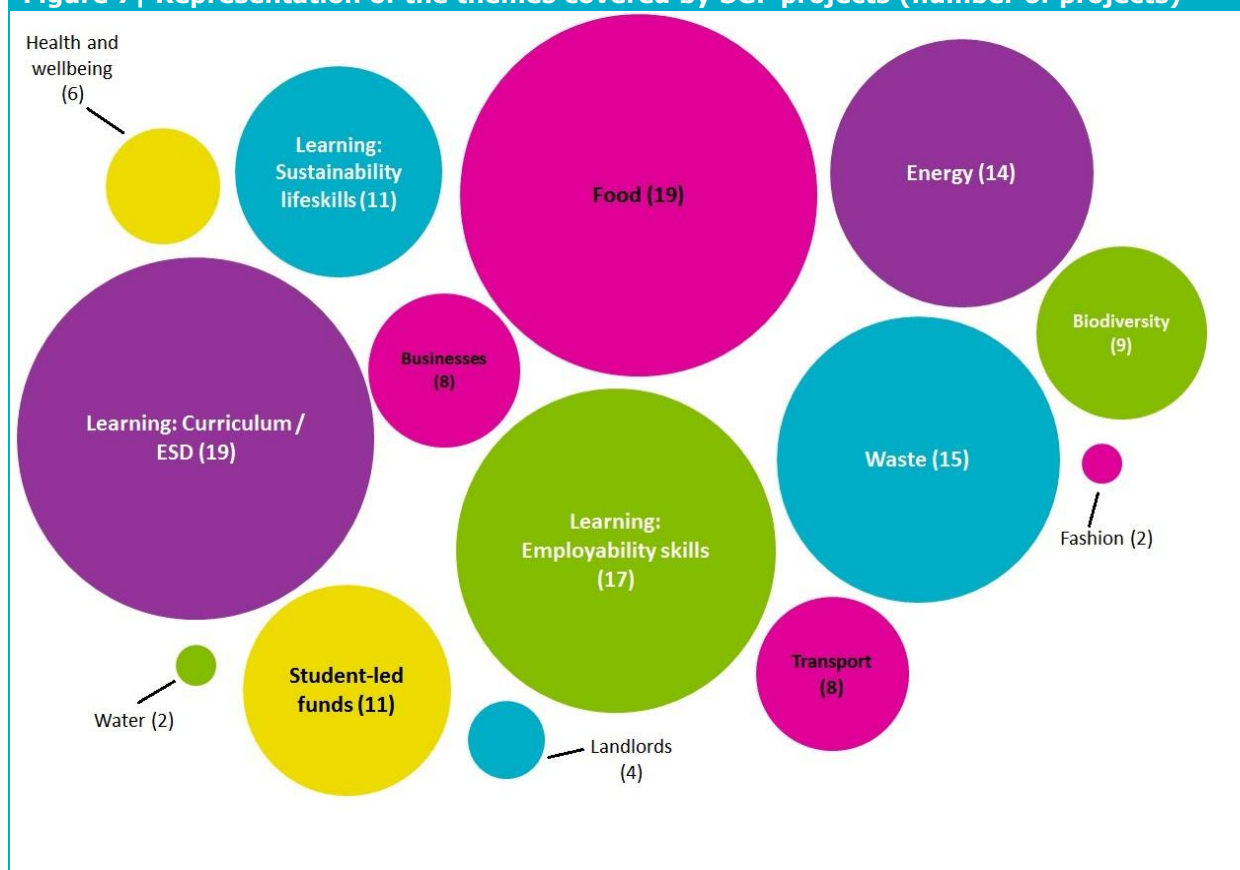
Project	Reported change	Sample
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across 6 projects, 34.8% (n=1316) reported making changes to their behaviour as a result of participation in SGF projects. A further 28.6% report the intention to make changes to improve the sustainability of their behaviour. Across 7 projects, 25% (n=1709) reported being more aware of the impact of their lifestyle on the environment. 	Active volunteers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across 6 projects, there has been an increase of 1% in those identifying as 'Positive greens' (to 16.7%, n=3343). 'Concerned consumers' have seen a shift of 7%, from 20.6% (n=4142) to 27.5% (n=3343). There has also been a decrease in those identifying as 'Honestly disengaged', from 24.8% (n=4142) to 22.7% (n=3343). 	Overall student population
Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48% of respondents said their awareness of environmental impacts has increased since the start of the academic year. 56% of participants said they had changed their habits and choices following engagement with the Bedfordshire Green Hub. 69% of respondents stated that being involved with the green hub had either improved their understanding of environmental issues, made them more aware of their impact of their lifestyle and habits, or gave them information on what action they could take. Over half of respondents reported making at least small changes to their habits and choices as a result of participation in green hub activities, and a fifth have made significant changes. 	Green Hub participants
Bristol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DEFRA segmentation surveys conducted in 2010, 2013 and 2015 demonstrates a step change in students identifying as 'Positive Greens', with an increase of 17% following completion of the SGF project. 	Student population overall
Roehampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of students classified as 'positive greens' was 26.5% at the time of the baseline survey, but this had increased to 33% by the time of the final survey. 	Student population overall
UCLan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Via our Defra segmentation, comparing our 2013 survey to our 2015 survey, we saw a decrease in 'Honestly Disengaged' from 36.4% to 24.5%. 56% report an increase in awareness of their environmental impact since the start of the academic year. 	Student population overall
Worcester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both institutions taking part in the project have seen a significant increase in 'environmentally positive' segments, i.e. 'Positive Greens', 'Waste Watchers' and 'Concerned Consumers'. In Worcester, the increase is 17%, and 33% in Birmingham. 	Student population overall
Leicester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38 out of 56 respondents, classed as active volunteers, reported that their awareness of the impact on the environment of their habits and choices has increased since 	Active volunteers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they started taking part in the project. 23 of 55 respondents say they have gone on to make changes to their behaviour, and a further 23 are in the process of making changes or hope to do so soon. 	
Liverpool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amongst Green Guild participants there was an increase in 'Positive Greens' from 35% to 49%, just over the course of the 14/15 session. 	Active volunteers

Behaviour change impacts by theme

Section 2.2 (see figure 2) of this report offered a classification of project activities according to sustainability themes. Figure 7 below outlines the number of projects operating in each area.

Figure 7 | Representation of the themes covered by SGF projects (number of projects)



This section considers the specific behaviour changes that have occurred in each theme. 'Learning: Employability skills' and 'Learning: Sustainability life skills' are covered in detail under the SGF target of '*Students leave higher education feeling they have the understanding and skills to take positive actions on sustainability*' (page 46). In most cases, evaluation activities have focused on assessing the impact of the SGF project overall, and therefore it is not possible to compare one activity, designed to encourage change, with another in terms of its impact on behaviour. Given the range of activities offered by each project (an approach in line with behaviour change theory – see section 6), it would be very difficult to identify the specific impacts of a particular activity. As with the overall data, the information presented by theme below should be seen as an indication of the kinds of changes that can be achieved as a result of sustainability

projects working in these areas. Under each theme, where possible, examples of activities are provided along with the behavioural change achieved across the SGF cohort and on an individual project basis.

Waste: The approaches adopted by SGF projects to influence waste behaviours include:

- Providing donation and collection infrastructure;
- Developing reusable products and low waste alternatives;
- Providing incentives for positive behaviour.

These approaches have secured the following changes:

Figure 8 | Waste behavioural changes

Project	Change	Sample
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across four projects, the proportion of respondents saying that they didn't recycle anything, from a list of commonly recyclable items, reduced from 9.1% (n=5029) to 0.6% (n=1755). 	Overall student population
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12% (n=209) across three projects say they have begun to recycle more as a result of their involvement in SGF activities. • 33% (n=209) across three projects say they have been wasting less food as a result of their involvement in SGF activities. 	Active volunteers
Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12% increase in respondents recycling instead of throwing away. 	Overall student population
Bristol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The winning hall in Get Green's Student Switch Off competition increased recycling rates from 55% to 65%. 	Overall student population
Exeter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents reporting to recycle or compost their food waste has increased from 22% (n=431) to 31% (n=243) between autumn 2013 and spring 2015. 	Overall student population
FXU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reused or composted 18 tonnes of food and drink waste. 	
Leeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reused 53 tonnes of food and drink that would have otherwise been wasted. 	
Leicester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 volunteers reported that they are wasting less food since being part of the Hungry 4 Change project. 	Active volunteers
Sheffield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24% (n=839) of respondents say they always take their own shopping bag with them at follow-up, compared with 21% at baseline (n=2934). 	Overall student population
UCLan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% (n=709) respondents say they take re-usable bags to carry their food shopping home at follow-up, compared with 21% (n=818) at baseline. • 34% (n=712) say they 'always' or 'very often' try to consume and use less. 	Overall student population

Energy: The approaches adopted by SGF projects to influence waste behaviours include:

- Providing incentives for positive behaviour;
- Assessments and audits;
- Using new technologies and providing 'kit'.

These kinds of approaches can result in the following changes:

Figure 9 | Energy behavioural changes

Project	Change	Sample
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36% (n=209) across three projects report that they have changed their habits to save energy as a result of their involvement in SGF activities. 	Active volunteers

Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saved 193.4 MWh energy through SSO competitions. 	
Brighton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 4% (n=205) reported that energy efficiency was not important at all when choosing their accommodation at follow-up, compared with 14% (n=713) at baseline. 	Overall student population
Bristol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The winning hall in the Get Green Student Switch Off competition reduced their energy consumption by 17.5%. 	Overall student population
Cumbria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When asked how often participants leave the lights on in rooms that aren't being used, those that answered daily or weekly dropped from 11.8% in 2013 to 6.8 % in 2015, and those that answered rarely or never increased from 67.9% to 71.4%. When asked how often participants leave the heating on when they go out, 15.5% more participants than in 2013 said they rarely/never leave the heating on with a reduction of 12% leaving it on daily/weekly. 	Overall student population
Liverpool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saved 361 MWh energy through Student Switch Off competitions in halls of residences. 	
Sheffield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 56% (n=843) respondents report never leaving lights on when they are not in the room at follow-up compared with 50% (n=2993) at baseline. 	Overall student population
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 214 MWh gas saved in private rented housing taking part in Green Impact Student Homes. 	
Worcester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One student house has had an energy reduction of 56% or £700 in energy bills through the support of Energy Advocates. 	Student participant

Food: The approaches adopted by SGF projects target a wide variety of food-related behaviours, from learning to 'grow your own' to buying local, and from setting up food enterprises to developing the skills to cook healthy meals. Examples of tools and techniques used to encourage these behaviours include:

- Food-based social enterprises;
- Improving access to produce;
- Developing skills for growing and cooking.

Figure 10 | Food behavioural changes

Project	Change	Sample
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 39% (n=209) across three projects say they have been eating more local and/or seasonal food as a result of their involvement in SGF projects. 23% (n=209) across three projects say they have been eating less meat and/or dairy products as a result of their involvement in SGF projects. 	Active volunteers
Cumbria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 52% of participants claimed to buy local produce on a daily/weekly basis, improving by 12% from 2013. 64.3% of participants (up by 10% from 2013) also suggested that they would be willing to make changes to the food they buy if they had a better understanding of the environmental impact it has. 63.6% of which would be willing to change their diet to reduce its ecological footprint; this is an increase of 8.6% from 2013. 	
Lancaster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When we asked people how they chose and bought their food the only area to rise in significance was 'environmental and ethical considerations', while 'price' appears to be factor sacrificed for this. 	

Leicester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 volunteers also report eating more local food, and 13 report eating less meat and dairy products. 	Active volunteers
Roehampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2% (n=150) of staff at baseline reported using small independent shops for their grocery shopping, compared with 8.3% (n=218) at follow-up. 	Overall staff population
Sheffield on a Plate	<i>"I have also learned a lot about being sustainable with food, and I now find that I waste a lot less. It has become almost second nature now."</i> Student volunteer	Active volunteer
UCLan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.3% (n=710) of respondents say they always buy locally sourced produce at follow-up compared with 5.6% (n=820) at baseline. 	Overall student population

Water: Encouraging a change in water related behaviours has been a focus for nine projects. Approaches have included:

- Competitions and rewards through Student Switch Off approaches;
- Removing bottled water coolers from students' union buildings;
- Pledges to save water.

Figure 11 | Water behavioural changes

Project	Change	Sample
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across three projects, 41% (n=209) reported changing their habits to save water as a result of their involvement in SGF projects. 	Active volunteers
Liverpool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 182 water-saving pledges from students. 	Overall student population
Staffordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated 3630 litres of water saved in private rented housing. 	

Fashion: A small number of project activities have also considered the impact of fashion and clothing, and sought to encourage changes in behaviour in this area. Approaches have included:

- Fashion shows highlighting potential for upcycling and ethics of the fashion industry;
- Running swap shops;
- Providing infrastructure for donation of materials.

Figure 12 | Fashion behavioural changes

Project	Change	Sample
Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 471 items of clothing collected for reuse. 	
BCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.3 tonnes of textiles, books and accessories were collected from students and staff. 	Overall student population
Bristol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 150 tonnes of items, including clothing, diverted from landfill through the Big Give over two years. 	Overall student population
Roehampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1715 items of clothing donated to swishing events. 	

Health and wellbeing: Although many projects have reported impacts on participants in terms of improvements to health and wellbeing, for many these have been 'extra' benefits whilst seeking other outcomes and so were not widely included in the attitudinal and behavioural surveys. Looking at combined results, two projects have reported that 44% of their active volunteers (n=242) became involved in their activities for the health benefits. A further 28% (n=242) got involved for the 'feel good factor'. Further detail of

the outcomes observed by project staff, and reported by project participants, can be found in section 4.

Transport: Five projects have focused on securing changes in behaviour that lead to the use of more sustainable modes of transport. Routes taken to achieving changes in behaviour include:

- Skills development;
- Financial incentives;
- Access to products and services.

Figure 13 | Transport behavioural changes

Project	Change	Sample
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43% (n=2020) of respondents across four projects reported walking between their home during term time and university at baseline, compared with 70% at follow-up (n=796). 	Overall student population
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11% (n=209) from across three projects say they have cut down on using the car for short journeys. • 5% (n=209) from across three projects say they have cut down on the number of flights they take, or plan to take. 	Active volunteers
Brighton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of students who reported that they frequently (usually every day) choose to use sustainable transport increased from 36% (n=536) to 49% (n=154). 	Overall student population
UCLan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of students reporting that they always choose environmentally friendly modes of transport has increased to 18% (n=701) compared with 10% (n=822). 	Overall student population

SGF target: An institutional increase in student awareness of sustainability

initiatives: As part of the overarching aim of raising the profile of the sustainability agenda within institutions, the projects have also tracked the awareness levels of sustainability initiatives amongst the student population. Reflecting the fact that securing SGF funding has been an opportunity for some students' unions to work on sustainability for the first time, increases in awareness of initiatives are to be expected. It is however worth noting the audience participating in the surveys when reading these results. In many cases, projects faced restrictions in sending out follow-up surveys at the end of the funding period, meaning respondents were mainly recruited from project participants which is likely to positively skew reported recognition.

Bearing the above limitations in mind, figure 14 below outlines some of the changes in recognition of sustainability initiatives demonstrated through survey research.

Figure 14 | Awareness of sustainability initiatives

Project	Change	Sample
Lancaster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who had not heard of the project has dropped from 49% to 7%, and those who had only heard the name and nothing else has dropped from 26% to 9%. 	Overall student population
Northampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the outset of the project, 41% of 577 respondents to the baseline survey were unable to name environmental sustainability initiatives; this had fallen to 14.5% of 311 in October 2014. 	Overall student population
UCLan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6% of respondents (n=661) report taking part in environmental schemes at follow-up compared to 3% (n=742) at baseline. 	Overall student population

4.6 Integration of sustainability into the curriculum (Education for sustainable development)

19 projects have linked with their institution's curriculum, doing so in a variety of ways:

- Ranging from engaging in committees designed to review the strategy for curriculum content across the institution e.g. Liverpool, Bedfordshire;
- To working within individual academics to embed sustainability within their teaching e.g. BCU, Exeter; and
- Representation from senior leaders on SGF project steering groups.

The SGF business plan outlined specifically that projects would contribute to the embedding of sustainability within curricula through the following targets.

SGF TARGETS

- Student governors, course reps, and academics become more engaged in sustainability, resulting in more courses with embedded sustainability content.

At this stage, it is difficult to put an exact figure on the extent to which SGF activities have resulted in an increase in sustainability content within the curriculum at SGF institutions. This is for a number of reasons, including the lack of baseline data (for example the results of a full curriculum review) on curriculum content, and the often long timescales associated with curriculum change (frequently curricula are reviewed every three to five years). However, evidence provided by the projects suggests the steps taken during the two years of SGF funding are starting to build the capacity and impetus for change. Examples of these steps are outlined below.

A key method for engaging students in sustainability has been through the introduction of sustainability content into course rep training, with 11 projects embedding sustainability in this way (Bedfordshire, Bradford, Bristol, Cumbria, Gloucestershire, Lancaster, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Northampton, UCLan).

Linked to this, SGF projects have also become involved in the formal process of embedding sustainability within the curriculum across the institution, working in partnership with senior leaders and academic boards.

Case Study | ESD at UCLan



Addressing Education for Sustainable Development within the formal curriculum wasn't part of the original project proposal for UCLan. However, the results of the 2013 Lifestyle Survey highlighted UCLan students' desire to see sustainable development included across all academic disciplines. The UCLan Students' Union Education Officer met with the Pro Vice Chancellor and was successful in securing a full-time graduate intern for 7 months to map current sustainable development content in courses. 17 courses have now been mapped via interviews with teaching staff and students. The Student Officers presented the recommendations to Senior Management in August 2015.

"From July 2015 onwards, we have been asked to become members of the Academic Board and we are now working closely with the University to help them to embed ESD within the curricula. This is a very exciting time, and something which we hoped would be

achieved through our project, so being able to drive and influence these regular meetings is a great opportunity." **Staffordshire**

Academic engagement with the SGF projects has also occurred in a number of ways; from individual academics mentoring student-led projects, to academics integrating elements of project work into the formal curriculum. Projects have engaged with an array of

departments and schools, moving beyond the easy hanging fruit of departments such as Geography and Environmental Sciences.

Examples include:

- Social sciences
- Business schools
- Hair, beauty and holistic

therapy

- Food and nutrition
- Education
- Sports sciences
- Fashion

"Our Image Centre Campus specifically is developing an embedded approach to sustainability across hairdressing and beauty therapy with the support of the Curriculum Partnership Fund." **Wigan & Leigh College**

"Hungry for Change has been a significant contributor in raising the profile of ESD in the institution, particularly from the students' perspective. The project has been a catalyst in embedding ESD in the curriculum in a number of programmes." **Dr Sarah Gretton, Head of Pedagogy, Leicester**

4.7 Employability

Alongside developing specific skills linked to sustainability, involvement in the activities delivered by SGF projects has also enhanced more general employability skills.

SGF TARGETS

- *Students are more employable.*

Again, the long term nature of this target, juxtaposed with the relatively short timeframe SGF has operated in, means further long term research is needed to fully assess the impact of participation on students' employability. However, SGF projects have collected evidence on the perceptions of volunteers of the impact in this area.

Projects were advised, where possible, to complete skills audits with their deeply engaged volunteers and project leaders to assess the impacts of participation. These participants were commonly asked for their perceptions of their abilities across a range of skills prior to and post involvement with the project. In addition to these audits, projects have

provided additional qualitative evidence from volunteers regarding their experiences of skills development. These two pieces of evidence show improved abilities as follows:

"It gave me a skill set and exposure to people and places that have had an absolutely tremendous impact on my life." **Student project leader, Leeds**

"I feel a lot more confident about getting a job now than I did in first year because I've grown personally and have set a precedent to go out and take part in more volunteer projects. The transition from education into the workplace is one of the scariest in life, but once you start building up a CV you create good foundations for further growth. Transferable skills will inevitably come to you if you try out a new activity. Even simple activities will involve planning, carrying out in a team and communication. These are all skills for use in the workplace as well. I'm certainly looking forward to continuing being a Plot Leader right up until the end of my degree." **Student volunteer, Leicester**

Figure 15 | Improvements in employability skills and attributes

Skill / ability	Evidence
General employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four fifths of Newcastle's 1099 volunteers reported gaining employability and enterprise skills. All of Roehampton's regular volunteers reported believing that their experience with Growhampton will improve their chances of getting a job when they leave university. Four fifths of Wigan's Dragon's Den participants felt that the project had contributed significantly to a range of employability skills.
Communications and marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Half of Southampton's BEES auditors said their skills in effective communication had increased. <i>"I have improved my communication skills. I feel more confident using business language and speaking with businesses about anything. I have learnt to be more flexible. Being in the BEES project a ground breaking project, I had to adapt to the needs of the project (our plans changed a few times)."</i> Student intern, Southampton <i>"I think taking on a Plot Leader role has really bolstered my confidence as well, as I can now talk to groups of people and lead them in activities with ease."</i> Student volunteer, Leicester <i>"I improved my self-confidence and marketing skills through assisting direct marketing for events consisting of 500 Sheffield students."</i> Student volunteer, Sheffield on a Plate
Project management and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three quarters of Southampton's BEES auditors reported that their knowledge of business management tools had increased, and four fifths reported they had developed skills in leading change. Only one of City's Green Dragons project leaders strongly agreed that they were good at motivating others at the start of the first year of the project, whereas four project leaders strongly agreed with this capability after being involved. Similarly, only four project leads agreed (strongly agree and agree) they were confident managing projects in November 2013, whereas seven agreed in March 2014. 88% of students actively involved in the Green Guild projects say their team leadership skills have been enhanced. All 10 students responding to the Leeds Green Exchange Student Fund survey reported to have gained project planning skills. <i>"Working in a group with other volunteers you have great opportunities to learn how to work as a team, I have been lucky to act as a leader of the group sometimes, giving me some leadership skills and running the market day stall gives you knowledge about retail and customer service."</i> Student volunteer, Roehampton

Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All ten students responding to the Leeds Green Exchange Student Fund survey reported to have gained finance/budgeting skills as a result of taking part. <i>"It's audited, which is good. We've got receipts and we can justify every penny we've spent, but we're given the trust and freedom to assume you know what you're doing."</i> Student volunteer, Liverpool
Team working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the students actively involved in Liverpool's Green Guild say they have enhanced their team working skills. <i>"Through Sheffield Student Market volunteering this year, I learned how to effectively and efficiently cooperate with people of a diverse culture background, and as a result, I am now more open-minded and more patient when it comes to team-working."</i> Student volunteer, Sheffield
Time management and organisation	<p><i>"Within my role as volunteer co-ordinator I have become far more organised especially in regard to time management as at one point I was carrying out this role, working in retail and doing work for university."</i> Student volunteer, Leicester</p>

The development of employability skills depended very much on the focus of the project activity, but also on the role individual participants adopted within the project. Projects that involved students being trained as energy auditors or assessors, those that relate to businesses, and those that see students developing their own projects are most heavily associated with skills development for employability. For project activities not overtly linked to employability and participants' future careers, there are examples of students taking on a leadership role within these activities and developing skills through this route.

"I guess kind of leadership I guess. I was the like appointed coordinator person, so I had to organise all the sessions and who was going to be running each session, so I guess I kind of got to learn more about doing that, to make sure that they like run on time and to remind people that sessions are going on and stuff." **Student volunteer, Liverpool**

Often, projects involving training programmes for students have sought to officially recognise the training students are receiving, through partnership with professional bodies and using recognised expert training providers. Examples include:

- Ten students receiving Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment certificates in 'Working with Environmental Sustainability' through Northampton's Planet Too project;
- Ten students receiving City and Guilds qualifications in home energy assessment through Energize Worcester; and
- 25 students trained in home energy auditing through the FXU Greener Living Project, with training provided by Community Energy Plus.



As mentioned at the outset of this section, very few projects have been able to follow-up with their participants as to the impact of participating on participants' employment

records, as during the timeframe of the fund only one year group has left higher education. However, those that have gathered data in this area paint a positive picture.

"We have collected case studies from interns involved with the project. After collecting leaver's data from our students that worked within social enterprise, we can confirm that they are all in graduate jobs." **Gloucestershire**

"Four former student staff and volunteers from the project have secured employment since the project and said the project had helped them secure their job." **UCLan**

"I have already secured a job for next year but I definitely think having the project on my CV and being able to talk about the skills I gained from the project during my interview really helped. Also the company I will work for have sustainability in their corporate vision and coming from a background where I have experience of sustainability definitely helped, in my interview we talked a lot about it." **Student volunteer, Leicester**

Other projects have also provided evidence of individual participants being employed in sustainability related roles after graduation as a direct result of their participation in the SGF project.

"I am currently about to start work as a Graduate Category Buyer at a national food distributor which is directly linked to my role in the project.

I was able to discuss in length during the interview project the pitfalls and obstacles we faced in the project, such as over-reliance on certain suppliers and of course issues with the weather affecting produce supply, as well as the successes of the project, such as the response we received from the general public." **Sheffield student - Sheffield on a Plate**



Sheffield on a Plate - Big Stew event

There are also some individual examples of students changing direction in terms of their future careers as a result of their participation in SGF projects, turning towards a sustainability focused career.

"One of our Student Staff in particular fed back that she in addition to learning about food sustainability as a concept, she had developed skills in working in teams and playing to peoples' strengths. Being involved has influenced her lifestyle choices (considering veganism). In terms of future jobs, she's now thinking about environmental charities or environmental programmes." **Lancaster**

"I also learned a lot about sustainable business, a topic I was not particularly interested in before- but would now like to pursue as a possible career in the future." **Third year Creative Writing student, Gloucestershire**

4.8 Personal development and university life

The SGF projects have impacted on the personal development and day to day lives of their participants in numerous ways. The following SGF target links to the development

of skills and knowledge, which will enable students to take positive action on sustainability, both during and after their time in education.

SGF TARGETS

- *Students leave higher education feeling they have the understanding and skills to take positive actions on sustainability.*

SGF target: Students leave higher education feeling they have the understanding and skills to take positive actions on sustainability' / Sustainability life skills:

Another learning focus for many projects has been the development of everyday 'life skills' relating to sustainability. Through workshops, events or through their volunteering experiences, students are learning practical skills that enable them to live in a more sustainable fashion. Figure 16 provides some examples of the events and activities that have been carried out.

Figure 16 | Examples of sustainability life skills events and activities

Project	Example
Green Impact Student Homes - Sheffield	GISH have run skills sessions for students, including understanding bills and heating, changing energy supplier, upcycling, Fairtrade, growing your own, composting, minimising food waste, reduce, reuse, recycle, travelling by train and carbon footprinting.
Leicester / Lancaster / Cumbria / Bedfordshire / Roehampton	Workshops and growing sessions have engaged students in developing the skills to grow their own food, as well as considering the wider issues around food production and consumption.
UCLan	Established the Eco English programme; working with International Language students across the summer break and sharing good practice globally with other students and institutions.
Wigan	A project with Level 3 Fashion students used men's shirts purchased from charity shops to create a new garment, using screen printing techniques to change the style and look of the garments. Students learnt about Fairtrade and ethical fashion, and about the many global human rights and environmental issues associated with the high street fashion industry.
Sheffield on a Plate	Sustainable Student Masterchef saw Sheffield College students working with University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam students to improve cookery schools, with a focus on using locally sourced, sustainable ingredients.

Habit discontinuity theory⁷ suggests that learning new habits and skills at points in an individual's life where significant change takes place can be an opportunity to embed positive habits/behaviours on a long term basis. Attending university can be seen as one such significant moment. The time frame of SGF has not allowed for long term investigation of the persistence of habits and skills learnt by participants. Some projects have measured the intentions of their participants to continue beyond their time in education, for example, 38.5% of respondents to Bedfordshire's end of project survey said they would continue to support various pro-environmental behaviours in the future.

Health and wellbeing: Some SGF projects focused specifically on improving the health and wellbeing of their project participants, however, for many this is a secondary benefit of their work. Working with disabled students, Bradford's Cycling 4 All project has increased participation in sport and commuting via sustainable transport methods at the same time as improving wellbeing.

"I want to thank the Cycling 4 All team for giving me the chance to be good at something and for making me feel welcome. So many groups out there don't consider disabled people but the experience I've had on the coast to coast has changed me. I'm now a cyclist. When doing the coast to coast for the first time since I have been in the chair I have been truly happy." **Student participant, Bradford**

Projects that have included food growing or contact with nature have also noted benefits to their project participants, beyond the intended outcomes of their activities, for example, improved mental health and contemplation of the relationship between people and the natural environment.

"The growing sessions offer a good wholesome and physical activity that students can participate in as a good alternative to sitting inside and studying. Many of the students have confided in me of having problems with stress or depression, they use the project as a way of relaxing and getting away from their workload or as a distraction from their feelings." **Leicester**

"[The Wassail] made me think a little more about nature and it's more cultural and philosophical significance. It made me want to participate more in the local community." **Exeter**

Case Study | Bradford Cycling 4 All



Bradford's Cycling 4 All project seeks to engage students with disabilities on sustainability. The project has had a large focus on wellbeing and many of the regular cyclists have reported physical improvements in health such as reduced weight, improved muscle build up and general improvements in fitness. The project has not solely impacted on physical health but also has improved outcomes for mental health. This corroborates a large number of studies that demonstrate the link between physical, outdoor activity and mental health. "For me, if it wasn't for this I would have just come to university done my work and go home. I never thought that I'd ever ride a bike, let alone do a coast to coast so for me this has been great in that I now have some friends that are not course mates" Student participant, Bradford

⁷ Verplanken, B, Walker, I, Davis, A and Jurasek, M 2008. Context change and travel mode choice: Combining the habit discontinuity and self-activation hypotheses. *Journal Of Environmental Psychology* 28 (2) 121-127 in file:///C:/My_Downloads/HabitsRoutinesSustainableLifestylesEVO502FinalSummaryReportNov2011(2).pdf

"GLP has provided me with a place to relax and a group of like-minded people to talk to when the stresses of my course have got me down, by giving me a feeling of belonging to a community. I have learnt many transferable skills, such as communication, customer service, team work and leadership. GLP has also shown me the importance of the arts in communicating science to a wider audience." **Student volunteer, FXU**

Carrying out a specific evaluation of an organised visit to Embercombe, a sustainability project near the city of Exeter, by measuring values and identification with nature before and after the visit, the project team at Exeter identified an increase in volunteers' 'self-transcendence values (caring more about others and the planet) and a higher identification with nature.

University / personal life: Many projects also noted an array of impacts of participation on students at a personal level, including making friends, integrating into the university and/or local community and developing self-confidence. SGF projects reported that in many cases, their activities were an entry into the students' union for participants. Sustainability activities offered students something new to engage with, and diversified perceptions of students' unions beyond the stereotypical bars, clubs and sports.

Case Study | Edible Campus at Lancaster



The Edible Campus project transformed 20 locations (3 acres of land across the campus) into edible growing spaces, aiming to reconnect the university community with the food they eat. Students and student staff have led on the development of the spaces, the enhancement of the existing Ecohub, and a range of engagement activities from the campus market to a summer festival. Lancaster have had more than 1500 people involved in the project who reported participating for all sorts of reasons: exercise, community, skills, international integration, fresh air, mental health, career development, fun and of course the food itself. Volunteers have logged 2,695 hours on the project across the last two years.

"The project has been successful in engaging hard-to-reach groups that the SU has traditionally struggled with (e.g. international and postgraduate students). The most significant and rewarding impact of the project has been the chance to see students develop confidence and pride in themselves and their achievements." **Bristol**

"By encouraging students to take ownership for the physical landscape of their university they are more likely to consider themselves an active member of the university community and are therefore more likely to engage in making the university as great a place as possible. Students have commented on how being part of the project has helped them to integrate into their new community." **Lancaster**

"The greatest impact that I've seen through the H4C project is the increased confidence in the students that I've worked with. Many are very shy initially when they arrive at the growing space or won't even approach you at an event. I witness big changes in student's behaviour not only with myself but also with other students and staff. They also start to work under their own initiative and stop asking all of the time." **Leicester**

"My personal achievements include developing self-confidence, persuasion and communication skills through distributing herb-packs and food waste caddies. At first I was quite nervous about approaching people at the re-freshers fair, but with encouragement I found it much easier to engage students in conversation. I was able to explain how to grow the herbs in a clear and concise way, and even persuaded people who had never grown anything before to take a pack! Distributing caddies also built confidence, as I had to knock on the doors of students whom I didn't know."

**Student volunteer,
Sheffield on a Plate**



Lancaster - Edible Campus

It's also worth noting that the SGF projects have also been a confidence-building exercise for some students' unions, for example, UCLan reflect that the project came at a time when the union was moving away from a commercial model to a membership services and engagement model. Their experiences in the SGF project have encouraged the union to bid for and manage externally funded projects in other areas.

4.9 Institutional relationships and commitment

Reflecting the findings presented in section 4.3, SGF projects report a range of impacts on their relationships with their institution, including cementing existing relationships, working in new contexts, and working with new audiences. Much of the evidence on the following three targets, set in the SGF business plan, is interrelated; please see section 4.3 for full details.

SGF TARGETS

- *Institutional leaders become more engaged in sustainability, resulting in a more holistic and mainstream approach to sustainability across the institution.*
- *Institutions become more receptive and collaborative to student opinion and demand on sustainability issues, and act accordingly.*
- *Institutions integrate sustainability into their graduate attributes and core purpose.*
- *An increase in the Green League scores at institutions with funded projects.*

Several projects provide examples of being involved in efforts to integrate sustainability across the organisation at a strategic level; something that is a new role for the students' union in many cases. However, these efforts are mostly in the early stages, with little evidence provided on the outcomes of involving institutional leaders in this way. Where there have been specific outcomes, for example, endorsement of a new strategy, it is often too early to identify impacts. It is also difficult to ascertain the specific impact of the SGF project in relation to wider changes taking place within institutions. A potential exercise for NUS will be to re-engage with the funded students' unions in the future to further ascertain the more long term impacts of work started during the SGF funding period.

Figure 17 | Evidence of engagement in sustainability at an institutional level

Influencing strategy	Lancaster	<i>"In the last year our PVC Education has agreed to chair the Green Lancaster Group and has secured HEA money to investigate ESD at Lancaster University – as part of this we are running a number of interviews with students, academics and senior management and have secured interviews with all PVC's and the Vice Chancellor himself."</i>
	UCLan	<i>"Our ESD Mapping Process has seen us consult directly with 17 Academic Course leaders and all five Executive Deans and the Pro Vice Chancellor. We inputted into the new Campus Master Plan and are currently inputting into the new long-term University Strategy. This has seen us influence the university and is helping to connect and embed sustainability across the institution."</i>
	Sheffield on a Plate / Green Impact Student Homes, Sheffield	<i>"[The] University of Sheffield is poised to write a sustainability strategy for the first time, partly as a result of increased officer engagement on this topic."</i>
Endorsement of strategy	Leeds	<i>"University of Leeds Vice Chancellor has signed off a new UoL Sustainability Strategy and has publically endorsed the aims of the UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development Youth Statement."</i>
Influencing action	Northampton	<i>"A number of university policies have been refined as a result of the project; for example the Student Halls of Residence refuse policy and travel and trips policies at the Students' Union." Institutional leader, Northampton</i>
	Worcester	<i>"Lessons from the project will be taken on board when building the new student accommodation." Institutional leader, Worcester</i>

Whilst there are examples of success, some projects report ongoing difficulties in engaging with their institutions on sustainability. Whilst others have received informal endorsement, or partial integration of sustainability, the need for continuing action to fully embed sustainability goes on.

"We linked the SGU's legacy with the University's graduate attributes. It is our aim to continue this campaign in order for the institution to explicitly include sustainability as part of their core purpose."

Exeter

As reflected in section 4.3, the feedback from NUS' direct research with institutional leaders was overwhelmingly positive. General feedback includes:



Exeter Students' Green Unit - Bird box making

.....

"The project has had a really large and lasting impact. The growing plots around campus will remain, the Hive will be doubling in size this year due to its success and the chickens have been a great addition to the campus." **Institutional leader, Roehampton**

"The Students' Green Fund activity at the University of Northampton has featured regularly as an agenda item within the University governance structure; including at Board of Governors level. This has kept the sustainability agenda firmly fixed on the radar as part of our key decision making processes." **Institutional leader, Northampton**

The impact of the SGF project activity on an institution's Green League score is difficult to assess. Whilst many criteria that feed in to the allocation of the score are related to the activities (and their related outcomes) that have been taking place across the SGF project, it is not possible to isolate the impact of these actions from other activity taking place within the institution. Additionally, in 2015, 69 institutions decided to withhold from participating in the scheme⁸, potentially influencing the rankings of those institutions that did partake. Bearing these points in mind, nine SGF projects reported that their institution's Green League score had increased over the course of SGF funding.

4.10 Carbon

As indicated above (section 2.3) full details on carbon savings can be found in the independent carbon report from Energise Consulting in appendix 3. The report was commissioned to evaluate the impact of the Students' Green Fund in terms of aggregated and union-specific carbon savings. Combined carbon savings have been calculated for the two funded years of each funded project, as well as the overall savings of the fund.

The report calculated that 4608.6 tCO₂e were saved as a result of the Students' Green Fund project activities. When compared against the initial fund milestones (4,000 tCO₂e saved per annum), this figure is lower than was anticipated at the outset, however, as identified in the independent evaluator's report (which can be read in conjunction with the current report), the wider impact of the various funded projects has contributed to a continuing, and emergent, trend towards energy-saving attitudes and behaviours in participants. This makes carbon-based savings difficult to quantify from a top-down perspective, given that many of the carbon savings attributable to Students' Green Fund supported projects are taking place on a qualitative level, e.g. through lifestyle and career choices amongst current and previous participants beyond the scope of the students' unions.

⁸ <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/jan/20/how-green-university-people-planet-green-league>

Lessons for delivery and engagement

5. Lessons for delivery and engagement

This section draws out the experiences of the SGF project co-ordinators to highlight key ingredients and lessons across a variety of issues; from the overall running of sustainability projects to the delivery of specific activities.

5.1 Key ingredients for running sustainability projects within SUs/institutions

Bringing together all observations about what worked, it is possible to distil some common characteristics of a successful sustainability project within a students' union.

Success is defined here as effectively engaging the target audience in sustainability related activity. The key features which emerged were:

Officer support: Securing the support of student officers is an important way to raise the profile of a project amongst student audiences, but also an important tool to leverage support and engage with institution representatives.

Organisational buy-in: Securing buy-in from the wider students' union, and also the institution, is key to the success of the project, particularly in cases where project activities are innovative and beyond the norm for the students' union. Being able to clearly situate the project and its activities in the wider strategic context of both organisations will help drive support for the project.

Visibility and access: Again raising the profile of a project, having a highly visible base for the project ensures students are aware. Ideally this should be somewhere with high footfall, but also projects should be aware of different areas on campus which may be frequented by different audiences, and should consider moving beyond the confines of the students' union building. Linked to this, and considered in more detail below, projects have identified strong branding and identity as a key ingredient for a successful project. Locating project activities at easily accessible sites is also important to reduce the effort required for participation.

Academic timetable: Projects have noted the importance of planning for the peaks and troughs of activity associated with the academic timetable. In cases such as food growing, this needs careful planning to ensure students are able to reap the benefits of their efforts, and also to ensure the project is able to secure sufficient year round volunteers. All projects have noted the importance of capitalising on the first term of each year, with recruiting interest to projects proving more difficult into the second and third terms. Linked to this, some projects have noted the benefit of running projects and campaigns over short periods, in order to maintain engagement and cope with student turnover.

Partnerships: The SGF projects have drawn heavily on partnerships with their parent institutions and local/national community organisations. Using the expertise and resources available through these partnerships has been essential to delivery, therefore mapping potential partners and investing in partnership development is recommended as a key feature of a successful project.

Transferability, variety and progression: Projects have noted the importance of ensuring project activities have an element of transferability to engage participants, either with academic courses, future careers, or social lives. Offering a variety of routes to engagement, with different levels of commitment required, also ensures the engagement of a broad range

of participants. Planning project activities to provide progression routes for participants, leading to more in-depth involvement once they are engaged with the project, is also important.

Marketing and evaluation: Ensure supporting activities, such as marketing and evaluation, are sufficiently resourced. Though students' unions and institutions have existing expertise, relying on already stretched resources can limit the potential of projects.

Flexibility: Linked to including evaluation activities that highlight what is and isn't working, there is a need to be flexible in terms of delivery to respond to this information accordingly. Similarly, project plans that have a degree of flexibility will allow projects to take advantage of opportunities that arise over a project's lifetime.

Student ownership: SGF projects have consistently reported the effectiveness of developing projects that allow for student ownership and leadership. Obvious examples of this are the student-led grant fund schemes, however, a similar approach has been delivered elsewhere, with activities starting off as staff-led, or with intensive support, before devolving roles and leadership to student volunteers.

The SGF projects also reflected on some difficulties and issues they had experienced over the two years of funding. Drawing out common experiences below highlights some useful considerations for students' unions planning sustainability projects in the future.

Resourcing: Many projects, particularly the patchwork style projects which featured a huge array of activities covering several different issues, reported struggles with getting the resourcing right to be able to deliver against the project plans. Securing additional support, for example, through student interns and assistants, can be a useful way of increasing capacity, and at the same time provide an opportunity for engagement at a deeper level.

Campus geography: Some projects reported difficulties managing engagement and delivery of projects across campuses in different locations, therefore a consideration of how to address the different characteristics between campuses at a project planning stage is essential.

Working practices: Whilst projects have reported extensive benefits of partnership working, they also warn of the need to bear in mind the differing timescales and working practices of partner organisations, which may have a bearing on project delivery.

Project lifetime: Despite some projects recommending a short-term project lifetime, others have found a two year period too short, finding that the first year was mainly devoted to planning and trialling approaches, with the projects starting in earnest in the second year.

5.2 General lessons on engaging students in sustainability related projects

This section considers learning from the projects on what has worked to engage students in sustainability related projects and activities. These lessons apply across a range of projects, from those involving fairly light touch involvement with directed change, to those requiring students to lead the change process (see section 6.6 for further reflections on this spectrum of change).

Hooks: An important tool for capturing initial interest, as well as ensuring ongoing engagement with projects, is the use of 'hooks', or, in other words, framing activities and projects to be relevant to existing interests. Once students were engaged, project staff then allowed sustainability content to 'creep in the back door'. Projects used a range of 'hooks',

including partnering with academic departments and societies to build in relevance to students' courses. Likewise, focusing on skills development and employability has similar benefits. Projects also report that some issues relating to sustainability are hooks in themselves, for example, projects and activities involving food and cycling. These issues are described as having strong existing cultures, therefore making it easier to appeal to existing interests.

Flexibility: Offering a wide range of different opportunities to be involved allows participants the flexibility to engage at the level they want and are able to, and is therefore likely to encourage greater levels of participation.

Opportunities for intensive engagement: At the same time as ensuring a range of opportunities are on offer, projects have reflected on the potential of offering more transformational opportunities, despite the need for more intensive engagement.

"It was clear that the more intensive engagement, although more difficult to achieve, had the greatest impact on participants awareness of their own behaviours, but also their ability to affect the behaviours of others. However this kind of level of engagement is not feasible to achieve with everyone, so it is clear that less intensive methods have a role to play alongside deeper engagement, if meaningful and widespread behaviour change is to be achieved."

Sheffield on a Plate

Branding and language: Exciting branding can be an important part of helping build an identity for projects on campus, however projects note the need to be careful about the language used. The terms 'green' and 'sustainability' can be off-putting and serve to disengage students who lack existing engagement with the subject, therefore believing the project and its activities to be irrelevant to them.

Incentives: SGF projects used incentives in a variety of ways, for example, through replicating and evolving existing programmes developed by NUS, such as Student Switch Off. Projects also provided other incentives for participation, linked to academic interests and career prospects, for example, by recognising volunteering through Higher Education Achievement Records. Small tokens such as t-shirts, hoodies and free food also proved to be good incentives and tied in to using hooks, and also created a positive brand.

Ownership and leadership: SGF projects which included a student-led element, reflected on the benefits of devolving responsibility to students to lead sustainability projects (see section 5.5 for more detail) as a means of securing in-depth engagement with the issues. Through leading projects, students are able to direct the focus towards issues that resonate with them, rather than participating in directed, top-down approaches. As a result, engagement can be at a deeper level, compared with other activities, according to the project's experiences. It is important however, to ensure that projects are provided with appropriate levels of support to help keep them on track.

Fun: Finally, a common reflection from both projects and participants has been the need to ensure activities and opportunities on offer are seen as 'fun' things to do. Competing with hectic academic, social and paid-work commitments means that students are often looking for activities to include an element of fun and a way of enjoying themselves.

"All of it! I honestly enjoyed all of the parts of working and volunteering with Get Green! It was great fun and a really rewarding experience, when we could see that we actually changed someone's mind or told them." **Student participant, Bristol**

"This is the best job in the world. I don't think I'll ever have such fun as I've had doing this." **Student staff, Bradford**

5.3 Lessons on motivating behaviour change

Focusing on instrumental change, projects noted their reflections on the process of encouraging changes in behaviour amongst student participants. Broadly matching the extensive literature on achieving pro-sustainability behaviour change, the following reflections outline lessons noted by the projects as being important tools in encouraging change.

Consistent messaging: Projects found that messages around sustainability behaviours required a consistent presence in order to achieve change, rather than one off engagement or involvement.

Targeted information and messages: As well as being consistent, messages need to be appropriately targeted to specific audiences in order to be seen as relevant and achievable. Projects also recommend starting with changes that match existing interests (similar to the hooks outlined above) for specific audiences.

Resources: Providing resources to enable behaviours to be completed is essential to removing barriers to change.

Incentivise change: Rewarding change is an important way of reinforcing positive behaviour, and at the same time adds an element of competition and fun, which also engages participants in project activities.

Normalise change: Showing evidence of peers and student leaders adopting the behaviours being encouraged makes sustainable behaviours an attractive and 'normal' proposition.

Peer learning: Identifying key individuals within students' networks is key to encouraging change within their social circles. Using intermediaries also has the benefit of reducing the inputs required to reach a larger audience. Seeing other people taking action has also been shown to be a motivator, with 26% (n=1813, across four SGF projects) of active volunteers saying that they had been motivated to change their behaviour as a result of seeing practical examples of things other people do.

Case Study | Energy and waste at Bristol



The Act Ambassador team of trained student volunteers was one of the highlights of the Get Green project. The Act Ambassador team were introduced to increase face-to-face, peer-to-peer engagement for sustainable behaviour change in halls. A team of twelve student staff knocked on every door in halls of residence speaking to over 2000 students about energy and waste saving and promoting the Student Switch Off competition. First year students were encouraged to engage in a few simple steps to save energy and increase recycling in order to win the competition. In 2014/15, the winning hall reduced their energy consumption by 17.5% and average recycling rates in all halls increased from 55% to 65%.

"All of the students who'd been directly involved in SOAP as a volunteer reported changes to their habits, whereas the effect on the wider population who'd heard of the project at second hand was much more diffuse. Focus on quality engagement with a smaller quantity, empower them, and watch them make wider ripples!" **Sheffield on a Plate**

"Largely volunteering at different events has prompted these changes. At these events I've been given the chance to teach other people about sustainability and have learnt more through passing on information to others in addition to the discussion it creates. Also because the project is largely practical, as opposed to being an abstract (ish) idea in a lecture, I have been able to interact with the environment and see how my own actions affect things."
Student volunteer, Leicester

Demonstrating change: Showing students practical steps they can take to be more sustainable, and including the detail on why, rather than just providing information, is also important. Ensuring participants are aware of the impact of the changes they are making, or helping to make, is also key to securing lasting change.

*"I feel more positive about living more sustainably than before, having seen the impact that it can have firsthand." **Student volunteer, Leicester***

*"I helped to reduce food waste. I am particularly proud of the fact that my actions had a direct impact on reducing food waste across the university campus. Not only did I help to reduce food waste but also allowed it to be redistributed to those most in need. In total, the Save our Sandwiches group managed to redistribute more than 3,000 food items - this is an achievement I am extremely proud of." **Student volunteer, Sheffield on a Plate***

5.4 Lessons on running social enterprises

The SGF projects which included the creation and development of social enterprises include:

- Brighton
- Gloucestershire
- Liverpool
- Newcastle
- Northampton
- Roehampton
- Sheffield on a Plate

The SGF projects operated social enterprises in different ways, though commonly, running social enterprises frequently involved students taking on a significant role in delivery. Some SGF projects had more of a guiding hand in initial phases, for example, coming up with ideas and providing an outline project plan (e.g. Growhampton, Gloucestershire). Others, particularly those social enterprises created through student-led funding schemes, had a much more hands-off role in coming up with enterprise ideas and plans.

These lessons are based on the reflections of SGF project leads on how to enable students to deliver a successful social enterprise.

- Involve students at an early stage to secure a high degree of buy-in, and allow space for idea development.
- Provide a level of accountability to enable students to access further support and resources.
- Whilst highly engaged students can drive forward social enterprises, ensuring a spread of responsibilities is essential to minimise risks.
- Encourage a range of roles, with both short term and long term commitments, and also across a range of experiences, ensuring that there is a match with relevant courses and future careers.

Case Study | Social Enterprise at Newcastle



Stu Brew is Europe's first student-run microbrewery enterprise, a thriving business enabling students to gain a wide range of business and employability skills whilst promoting local produce and sustainable business practice. The microbrewery was developed as a partnership venture with the Chemical engineering and Advanced Materials Department. All profits are now recycled back into further student training and the long-term sustainability of the student-led venture.

- Where possible, use the expertise within the institution to support delivery of various elements of the enterprise, including relevant legislation.
- Plan for contingency, for example longer lead times, to truly embed student leadership.
- Carry out, or encourage, in-depth market research to fully understand potential pricing and profitability.
- Ensure there is a strong emphasis on the sustainability credentials of the enterprise, to engage customers in the journey.

Reflections from student social enterprise leaders

"I have learned how important it is to promote sustainable development, not only because of the great impact it has on the environment, but also because it can be used as a vehicle for improving the quality of life in general. Furthermore, I am proud that I have had the opportunity to communicate with customers, letting them know about the purpose and aims of the Sheffield Student Market."

Student volunteer, Sheffield on a Plate

"The Bike Co-op has been a great initiative led by us students with the guidance of Bruno from the Bright 'n' Green GoGreen project coordinator, each week has been different and it allows our bicycle maintenance knowledge to be stretched and improved due to the fact we are encountering a variety of old and new bikes."

Student volunteer, Brighton

5.5 Lessons on student-led grant schemes

Giving individuals or groups of students the opportunity to develop their own sustainability projects, through the provision of funding and support, was a common theme with the following projects, including a student-led grant scheme as an element of their work.

Although the grants schemes were delivered in a unique way by each project, it is possible to draw out some common learning on what contributes to a successful scheme.

- Provide training and support for students to help progress ideas into full proposals, for example, through SMART planning techniques.
- Providing examples and initial ideas can help trigger fuller project ideas amongst students, in particular those that are linked to their formal curriculum.
- Setting timeframes for submission and approval has, in some cases, been prohibitive to applications, as students' capacity to apply and deliver projects varies greatly within the academic year.
- Ensure the application procedure is comprehensive, but at the same time not too complex and demanding to be off-putting.


Case Study | Student-Led Grants Scheme at Leeds



Over the two years, The Green Exchange developed their Student Fund, which allowed students from any HE or FE institution in the city of Leeds to apply for grants for student-led campaigns, exhibitions or projects. The applications were judged by a panel of University and Union staff and students and their implementation and evaluation was supported by the Green Exchange Team. By putting the power in the hands of the students with peer-to-peer support, rather than a top-down project management approach, LUU have subverted traditional power structures and allowed students to come up with fresh and innovative projects. Making the Student Fund available across multiple SUs was a completely new approach to projects at LUU. 29 student-led projects were supported in total across two years. "[Leading a Student Fund project] gave me a skill set and exposure to people and places that have had an absolutely tremendous impact on my life", student project leader.

- An informal interview can be an important means of accessing a greater level of detail about the students' ideas and plans.
- Creating a panel or board to assess and approve funding bids can engage a range of individuals in the project, for example, academics, institution sustainability staff, students' union retail staff and sabbatical officers.

Case Study | Student-Led Grants at Exeter



Anyfin is Possible was started after students were shocked to learn in a lecture that 80% of the fish consumed in the UK comes from 5 species. The project aims to raise awareness of the environmental issues that surround over fishing and promotes eating a wide range of fish that is sustainably sourced. Anyfin is Possible was awarded the 'Student-Led Project of the Year' during the Guild Awards ceremony recognising achievements by students during the academic year.
<http://anyfinispossibleworld.blogspot.co.uk/>

- Introducing a competitive/crowdsourcing element can secure wider support and engagement from the student population overall.
- Consider carefully the type of project being proposed, and the tangibility and feasibility of what is being proposed. Exeter's Students' Green Unit found, for example, that 'operational or technology' projects that relied on another individual or organisation making a change had a lower rate of success, with students often losing interest and momentum. At the same time, sometimes it is necessary to take a risk and learn from any failures along the way.
- Assign successful projects a mentor or sponsor from within the students' union or institution.
- Staff administrative support is vital, including purchasing items and processing receipts rather than providing cash up front.
- Create a mandatory reporting process which ensures collection of impact data.

Northampton's Planet Too project uncovered some important learning when initially adopting a loan scheme for student-led projects. The project was re-focused away from this approach, after research revealed a reluctance amongst students to take on additional debt, and feeling they lacked the capacity to run a project that is successful enough to make loan repayments whilst studying full time. Instead, the students' union recruits students to the business and assumes the role of the investor. Students then report back regularly on progress and provide regular financial updates, without the financial burden at an individual level.

Reflections from student participants in grant fund schemes

"...the finance stuff, saying how much everything's going to cost and when you're going to be able to deliver things, that sort of thing that you wouldn't necessarily have to do during your degree." **Student project leader, Liverpool**

"I believe our project did achieve what it set out to do - we wanted to teach people to cook healthily and sustainably... The classes themselves were extremely popular... Our whole team learned to manage an event. I personally learned people management skills." **Student project leader, Exeter**

"I've graduated with a first and learnt so much about running a business since this time last year. You've opened up a few opportunities for me in terms of funding, and I feel more experienced and ready to take on another project." **Student project leader, Northampton**

5.6 Lessons on community partnerships



Working with organisations with similar aims and objectives can be a vital way of increasing the capacity to deliver within a project, however working with external organisations can also have pitfalls. The following section outlines the learning from the SGF projects in terms of the benefits and downsides of working with community partners.

- Carrying out stakeholder mapping at the start of a project can be a useful way to identify appropriate partners.
- Trusted and respected organisations (and individuals) can give projects a seal of approval with key audiences and increase visibility.
- Identify organisations that may be able to share or provide equipment and expertise, along with access to participants.
- Emphasise the benefits to organisations, for example, provision of a population of willing volunteers (students).
- When entering into a partnership, be clear about goals, expectations, commitments and responsibilities from the outset.
- Know the limits of the project's capacity to engage with partners; being prepared to say 'no' or 'not yet' in cases where there may be a lack of resource to engage with potential partners, and in cases of mission drift.

Reflections from community organisations

"Anyone who criticises Exeter's students for lack of neighbourliness should come to St David's and see what they've achieved in Richmond Road. Residents, local businesses and our school children all think they have done a brilliant job - and, indeed, they have." **Christine Fraser, resident and member of St. David's Neighbourhood Partnership**

"An initiative like the GLP is another boost to an industry that is important for food security, health and tackling wider issues such as globalisation and climate change." **Dan Newbury, Organic farmer & Farmstall supplier, FXU**

5.7 Lessons on academic partnerships and engaging staff

The impact of the presence of an SGF project running within the students' union on the relationship with individual institution staff, and the institution overall, has been covered in depth in section 4.9 of this report. However, the projects have also provided some reflections on the steps they have adopted to build on existing, and develop new, relationships with individuals in their institutions.

- Project leads reflect that using a prescriptive approach can disengage academic colleagues, with the most productive routes involving working in collaboration with academic staff to identify opportunities to integrate sustainability within their teaching.

- Targeting 'early adopters' is key to provide examples of what and how things can be done. Key staff, such as education officers and course leaders, are also important nodes to build networks and relationships.
- Harnessing students as agents of change is essential; ranging from collecting evidence for demand for, and perceptions of, relevance of education for sustainable development through research, to linking individuals up to engaged students.
- Use internal communications to reach audiences that do not already have a relationship with the students' union.
- Use a language that appeals to the specific audience – retention, recruitment and satisfaction can be attractive concepts, particularly at higher levels.

Reflections from academic staff

"The SGF project has moved student union activity to a new level, raising the level and profile of student action and also transformed the union. The achievements of our students through SGF support are now one of big stories university leaders tell. It has been instrumental in revolutionising understanding of what our students can achieve. The best £5 million HEFCE ever spent in terms of impact return on investment." **Chris Willmore, Academic Director of Undergraduate Education, University of Bristol**

"The Hungry for Change project contributed an outline contents for the unit on Feeding the World in the Sustainable Futures online course, which provided the basis for that unit (one of four in the course). The LUSU were extremely helpful in publicising the course bringing 256 staff and students to the website, 109 of whom studied the units to the point of passing the multi-choice tests. We have used the programme to illustrate the benefits of student-staff collaboration on curriculum development in a number of presentations." **Prof. Derek Raine, Associate Director, The Centre for Interdisciplinary Science, University of Leicester**

5.8 Lessons on working in the private rented housing sector

With approximately 30% of students living in the private rented housing sector (HESA, 2013)⁹, working in this context has been a key part of a number of projects. Similarly, as this often represents the first move into completely independent living for students, it can also be seen as a moment of change, and a prime opportunity to embed positive behaviours that will last well beyond university careers.

- Before planning a project, ensure a good level of understanding of the private rented sector in the area, for example, if there is a surfeit of housing, an award scheme that is seen as giving a competitive advantage is likely to be more successful than in areas of scarcity.
- Be aware of government policy and funding that supports action in the private rented sector, but do not be reliant on these streams as they are subject to frequent change.
- Ensure audits or assessments are followed up, both to reinforce behaviours and to fully understand the impact.
- Where audits are taking place, be aware of potential difficulties gaining access, and consider the health and safety risks to student auditors.
- Awards schemes can incentivise and reward positive behaviour amongst landlords.
- Identify actions that require various levels of interaction from landlords to account for varying levels of interest and engagement.

⁹ https://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1897&Itemid=634

- Target landlords that already have existing engagement and strong levels of communications with their student tenants in the first instance, to act as pioneers of good practice.
- Utilise existing local networks of landlords, rather than trying to gain access through tenants, and engage them in the project from the start.
- Ensure the advice or action being requested is properly targeted at student renters, as there may be differences compared to other categories of tenants.
- Plan student tenant engagement activities carefully, remembering that this audience could be more difficult to access, compared to students living on campus / halls of residences.
- Understand the relationships within households, and also the relationships students have with their homes (e.g. Energize Worcester found that many students considered the properties they were renting to be more of a 'temporary shelter' than a home).



Reflections from private rented sector tenants and landlords

"I am now aware of how the smaller actions can make a massive impact and how better to positively transfer sustainable behaviours to others." **Student tenant, Worcester**

"Being aware of energy saving and environmental awareness I am trying to keep up with current issues. If by taking extra steps this saves money for the tenant and helps the environment then it's a win-win situation." **Landlord, Sheffield Green Impact Student Homes**

"I always tried to reduce the impact of my lifestyle on the environment and I now live in a GreenPad which I found through the project, so I have a "consumer" experience of the project too. It has made living a bit more sustainably a lot easier." **Student tenant, Staffordshire**

Why things worked: linking with theory

6. Why things worked: linking with theory

6.1 Reflections on SGF projects

Unions applying to the fund were required to undertake projects which would result in measurable change; the SGF did not specify precisely which behaviours were to be changed, in keeping with its emphasis on student-led projects, and allowing students to pursue their own sustainability concerns.

The resulting projects adopt a wide range of change approaches, targeting a wide range of behaviours. Some are instrumental, being very clear about the behaviours they are aiming to change (e.g. providing a workbook and assessment framework to help participants make those changes) while others are more open-ended, seeking to build new programmes, structures or curricula out of which a variety of possible changes will flow.

A few projects have specified a theory of change (or indeed, several theories applying to different elements). The final progress report template completed by projects encouraged them to apply a theoretical lens to their work, reflecting on how their experiences matched theoretical processes of change. NUS has also worked with external evaluator Andrew Darnton (see section 7.1) to 'stand back' and survey the 25 projects as a whole, categorising them in theoretical terms.

In conducting this analysis, two conceptual frameworks have been used:

- The ISM Model¹⁰ (Individual, Social, Material)
- Spectrum of Learning and Change

For further detail on both of these frameworks please refer to appendix 2.



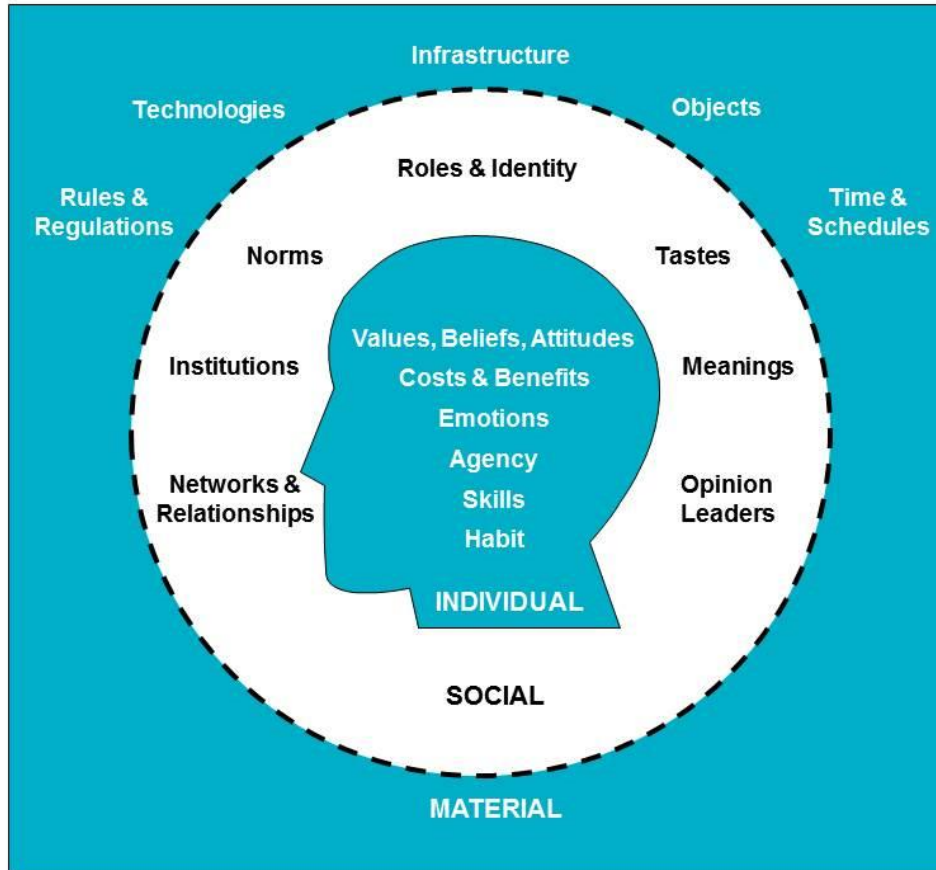
6.2 ISM analysis of SGF projects

The following analysis cuts across all 25 SGF projects, and analyses them collectively, in terms of the factors and influences on behaviour which they are targeting. The analysis pulls out common characteristics from the 25 projects, and describes them in order to understand the ways in which SGF projects are influencing lasting change. Much of this analysis reflects the 'lessons' identified in chapter 5, but adds a theoretical lens to understand why these 'lessons' stand out as factors for success.

¹⁰ <http://www.gov.scot/resource/0042/00423436.pdf>

The ISM model (figure 18) is split into each of its three contexts (individual, social and material), and key characteristics of the projects are mapped onto each factor in each of the three contexts; commentary on the analysis is provided beneath each context.

Figure 18 | ISM model



6.3 ISM Individual context

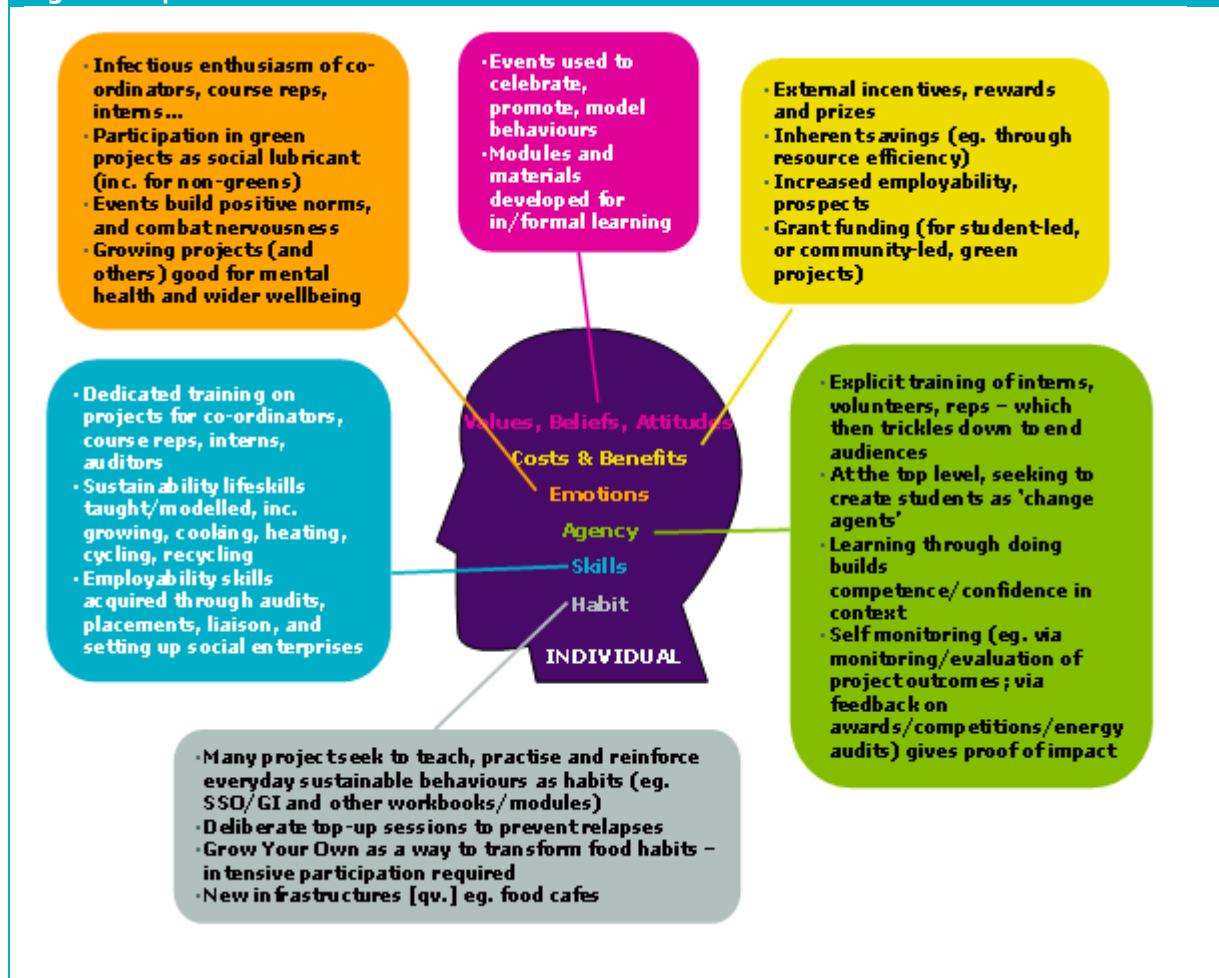
Elements of all projects aim to build positive motivations for sustainability among their audiences, although it would appear that direct attempts to win hearts and minds are relatively few. Values, and attitude, change appears to be a means rather than an end for most projects. Whilst communications have been a constant feature of project activity, this has frequently been at a lower level, in the detail of delivery, rather than as a key focus or project approach. Influencing (Values, Beliefs and Attitudes) appears to be approached by more face-to-face methods, especially via events e.g. Meat Free Mondays. There also appears to be a notable lack of explicit norms campaigns (e.g. telling students what proportions of their peers behave in particular ways): although norm activation is inherent in feedback-based monitoring and audit activities. It is also demonstrated in events and competitions.

Costs: are described as critical to drive engagement and action by the SGF projects, and by their participants. All kinds of formats are used including funding (e.g. grants), savings (e.g. from energy saving), negotiated discounts (e.g. reduced rates for students on public transport), prizes (e.g. SSO model for winning halls), wages (e.g. living wage for student staff and interns) and non-financial benefits (e.g. awards).

Agency: SGF is designed to stimulate student-led action on sustainability, meaning that projects have been designed placing students at the centre of delivery. Evidence of increasing agency is provided by the SGF projects at multiple levels. At a basic level, this was providing face-to-face, practical experiences which 'handhold' participants through adopting new behaviours e.g. food growing projects which teach student volunteers basic gardening and food-growing skills. At the highest level, for project staff, interns and volunteers, the explicit aim of many projects has been to create 'change agents' with a thirst for driving positive change for sustainability at the heart of their, and their institution's, identity and future purpose.

Habits: In different ways, all SGF projects have targeted habits. In keeping with theory, they do this in two ways. Firstly, by targeting individuals and helping them break and form habits through intensive (individual or group) interventions. Secondly, by targeting the environment within which students act, by addressing more 'material' factors like the infrastructure or by providing new institutions, with new rules and ways of working (e.g. funding schemes).

Figure 19 | Individual context



6.4 ISM - Social context

The implicit purpose of SGF projects is to create a new student identity. To achieve this, projects have recognised the need to go beyond the 'usual suspects' and reach new audiences previously unengaged in either sustainability related ideas and activities, and/or unengaged in the activities of the students' union. The presence of SGF project activities within students'

unions provides a space for a new student identity, based on engagement and partnership and informed by the values and actions of sustainability.

Norms: On the whole, norms are embodied and enacted through project activities, rather than featuring as explicit instructions from project leaders or fellow students. As mentioned above, there is little sign of hectoring or students telling each other how to behave (although some projects, such as campaigns through student-led funding schemes, do feature elements of this). Changing norms goes hand in hand with campus transformation e.g. an edible campus involves sustainable food attitudes and behaviours as well as the necessary growing spaces and markets, meanwhile green homes involve energy saving norms as well as efficient housing stock. In this way norms bridge the Social and Material.

Institutions: New 'institutions' have been created across SGF projects. Some of these are formal/hard institutions (e.g. cafés, markets) and some are soft (e.g. bodies of people, like Green Units or funding schemes). In other cases, these institutions are more like brands (e.g. established NUS projects like Student Switch Off and Green Impact, plus those being created or piloted in new contexts through SGF such as Green Impact Student Homes in Sheffield). All these kinds of institutions also bring with them their own sets of *Rules & Regulations* (see Material context below) – both formal and informal – which require different ways of doing things. This is an indication of the need to change the environment in order for transformational behaviour and culture change to occur, and endure. The legacy plans currently being rolled out by the SGF projects should mean that these new institutions can outlast the funding term of SGF and ensure lasting change. Follow-up research with the SGF projects a year or so after the end of the fund would provide an interesting insight into the potential for long-lasting change.

Meaning: The projects have reconfigured the meaning of materials they focus on – 'food', 'waste', 'fashion' – but have also begun the process of reshaping identities (e.g. what it is to be a students' union, and a student at their university / college / community). By creating new norms (see above), ultimately the SGF projects are attempting to re-define what it means to be a fully-qualified and fully-prepared student for adult life. Operating with the formal and informal curriculum, projects are targeting a new meaning of the skills and experiences necessary in their students' careers beyond higher education. Those SGF projects who have worked with businesses also approached this meaning from the 'other side' – influencing workplaces to improve their sustainability and further driving demand for these new skills.

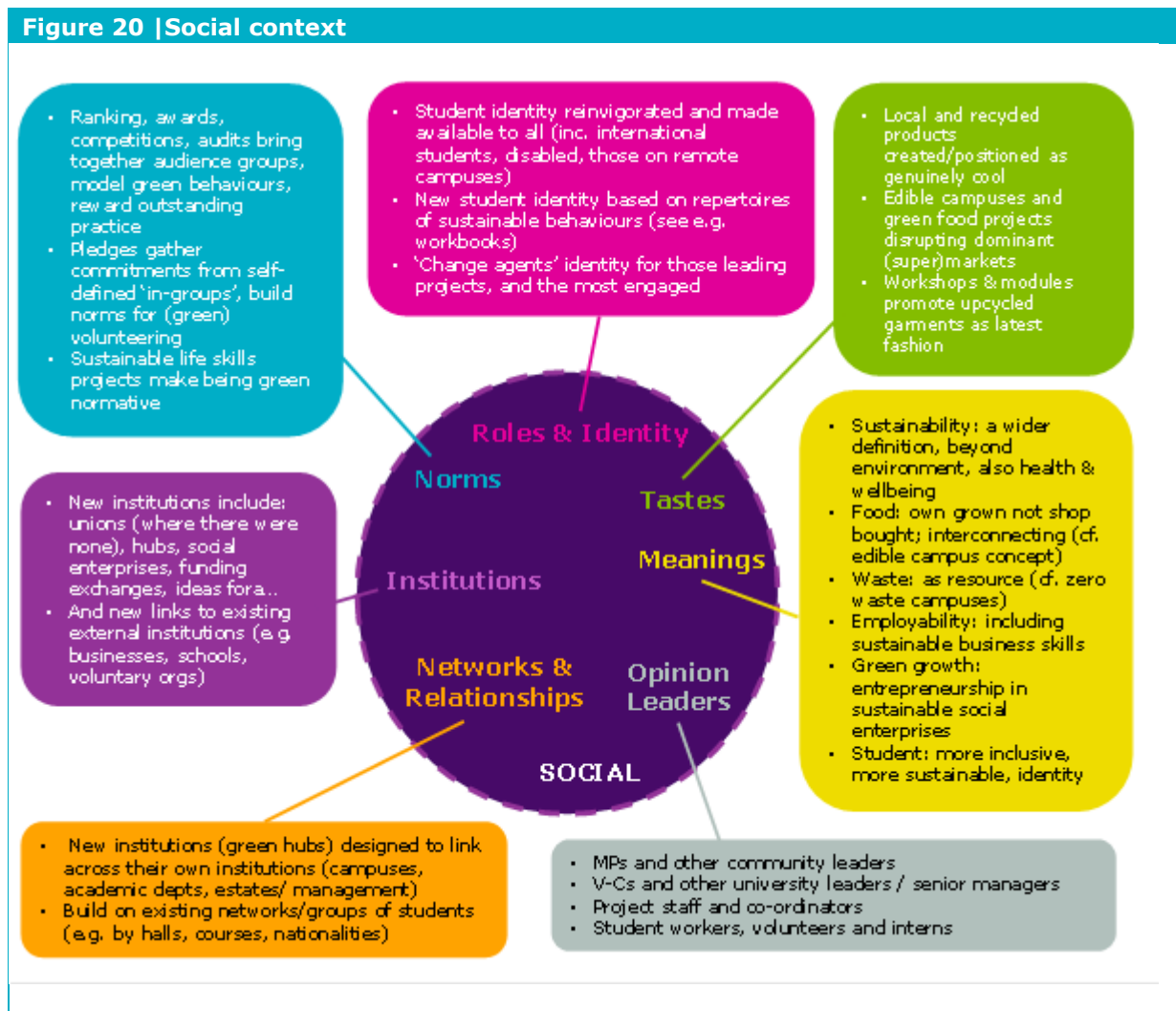
Networks: As mentioned throughout this report, networking within and beyond institutions has been crucial to support delivery of the SGF projects. The result of these partnerships is a repositioning of the students' union within the institution (as a theoretical and in some cases physical 'hub' of sustainability activity) and also changing the nature of relationships within the local community (for example, Staffordshire's GreenPad working with local landlords in a new way).



Opinion leadership: The endorsement of opinion leaders within the students' union (e.g. presidents, sabbatical officers), the institution (e.g. vice-chancellor, sustainability team) and in the community (e.g. MPs) has been vital in enabling the SGF projects to leverage other funds, in-kind support, and forge new relationships. Leadership from individual students has also been

found to be essential to ensuring widespread engagement, with interns and in-depth volunteers achieving greater success as advocates for a project over paid project staff.

Figure 20 | Social context



6.5 ISM Material context

Infrastructures: The two years of funding have seen a profusion of new infrastructures being put in place by SGF projects. The need for new infrastructure, and the type of infrastructures provided reflect the different starting points of different projects: some students' unions needed a functioning building or forum for debate, whereas others started to look more off-campus (e.g. acquiring new growing spaces). Infrastructure has been developed in order to enable certain behaviours, as a sort of removing of barriers (e.g. growing spaces remove the frequently cited barrier to growing your own food). The infrastructures are linked and support wider changes (e.g. food markets and outlets providing a market for produce from growing spaces). Once created, the new infrastructure has continued to support transformative change, as practices evolve to capitalise on the new environments (e.g. a cycle hire scheme at the Growhampton Hive café).

Technologies: New technology is required to support new project approaches (e.g. to pledging/enrolment) and new behaviours (e.g. cycling for disabled students). Some of these technologies can become freestanding elements which can in turn be rolled out more widely e.g. new software, apps and online learning modules. New equipment (e.g. adaptive bikes) is

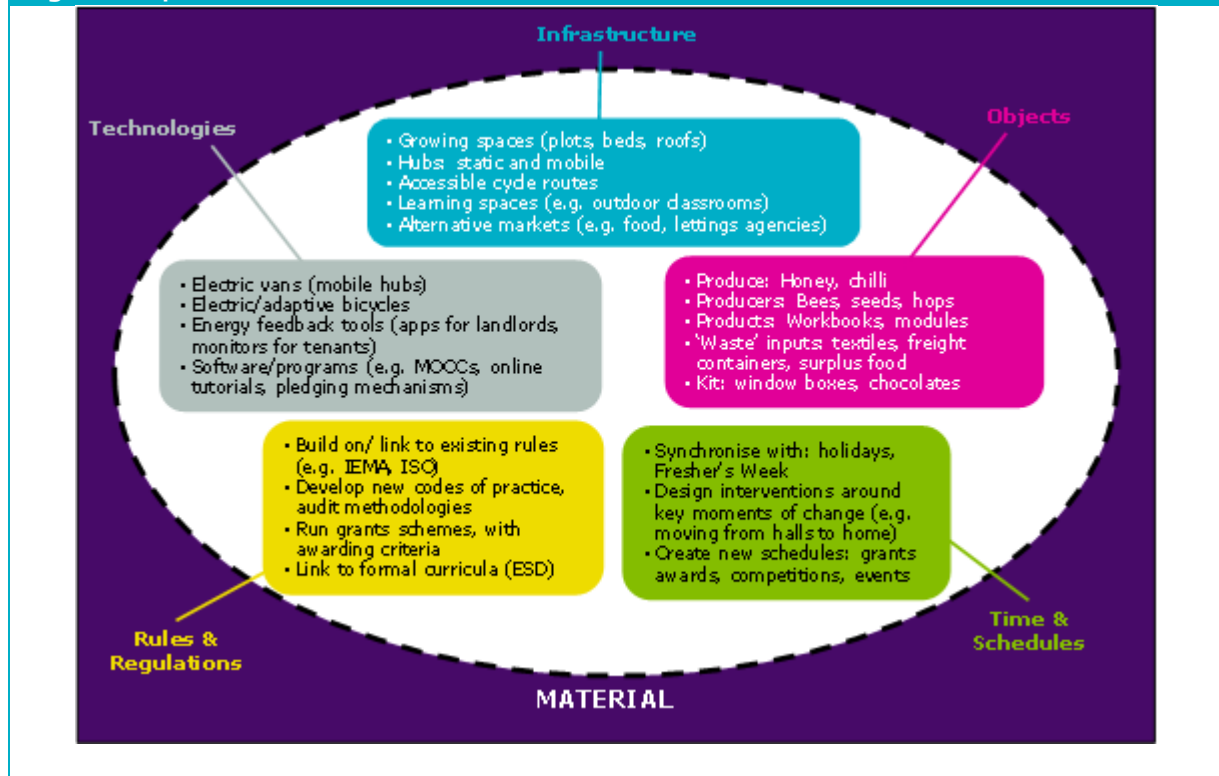
another example of how SGF projects have the potential to produce lasting (and self-funded) change.

Objects: Like technologies, objects are required for practices to happen, for example some are outputs from projects (e.g. workbooks; home grown produce) while others are inputs (e.g. seeds). Still others are used during a project (e.g. incentives for saving energy in Student Switch Off, or loaned items from Green Impact Student Homes' sustainability library of tools and resources) while some are transformed through the project, a good example of this being where waste items are upcycled (whether clothing, surplus foodstuffs, or freight containers).

Rules and Regulations: These implicitly or explicitly guide how things should be done, and often flow from informal or formal institutions. Rules and Regulations appear across numerous SGF projects, and help ensure lasting and transformational impacts. Sometimes projects have tied themselves to existing governance or awarding frameworks (e.g. academic courses, or Environmental Management Systems) however, in other cases they have formed new units that supplement existing arrangements (e.g. sustainability modules in fashion or architecture). Other SGF projects seek to write new rules, by bringing together lessons from current practice (e.g. in business ethics, or energy auditing); in other instances they are modifying current rules (e.g. rental agreements, to prevent energy bills being all-inclusive). Finally, some frameworks are new, such as student-led funding schemes (for students themselves, or for community bodies to bid into), which bring with them a whole set of new rules about what can be funded, how to apply, and how to demonstrate effectiveness. Taken together, these rules add up to transformation in institutional frameworks, and anchor culture change.

Timings: SGF projects have been keen to emphasise the need to work with existing institutional timings within the academic year. This timetable has presented obvious opportunities, such as freshers' week which is a key opportunity for projects to engage new students. Likewise, a number of projects have noted certain time-critical opportunities to change behaviour and instil new habits. 'Moments of Change' are provided by gap years, and the move to private rented accommodation, as well as the act of becoming a student for the first time (i.e. freshers' week). Conversely, the holidays present a potential problem for non-academic projects, like growing schemes. Projects have sought to engage different audiences as a result, for example summer school students, staff and community partners to tend to plots in growing spaces out of term time. Many projects have also created new events in order to impose new schedules of their own. Competitions are good examples of this, with rounds and deadlines, before a final showpiece event to drive and celebrate engagement. Finally, it should be remarked that many projects have also addressed questions of space as well as time. Making sustainable projects or behaviours accessible has often meant going to students (and out into communities) leading to the use and development of mobile hubs and outreach activities.

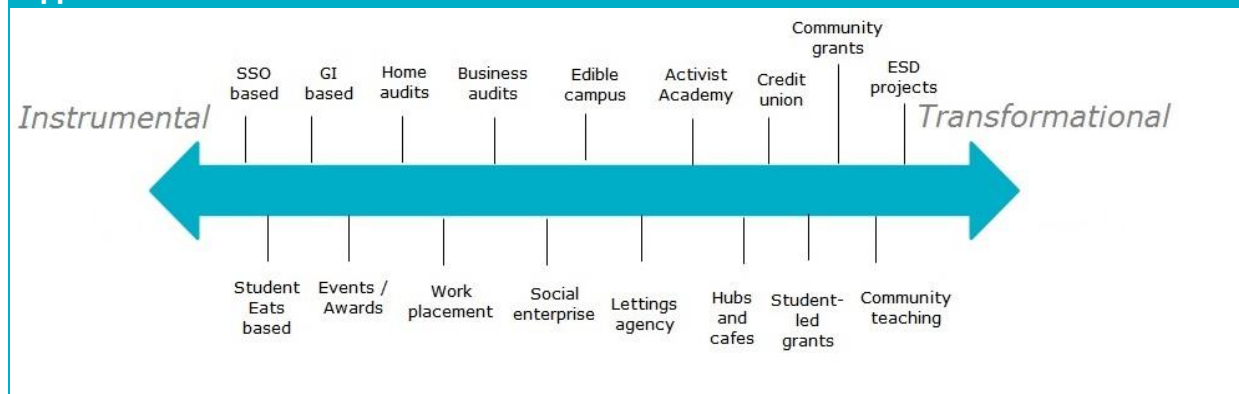
Figure 21 | Material context



6.6 Learning and change analysis of SGF Projects

As well as looking at the individual factors which have encouraged change, it is also possible to apply a theoretical lens to the types of change that the various approaches and activities encourage.

Figure 22 | Understanding SGF projects - from incremental to transformational approaches



Each of the 17 project elements and activities plotted in figure 22 above is described briefly below, with an explanation of where each element can be positioned on a scale of instrumental to transformational change. This scale draws on the theory of education for sustainable

development (ESD) developed by Vare and Scott (2007)¹¹. This theory outlines two complementary purposes for (ESD):

1. Promoting Behaviour Change

Relates to the teaching of pre-determined skills and behaviours, which are to be adopted as taught. The impact can be measured in terms of wider environmental impacts. The downside is that it does not build our capacity to act as autonomous individuals, in the short or long term.

2. Exploring Sustainable Living

Relates to building learners' capacity to think critically about the behaviours identified as delivering sustainability. There are no pre-determined behaviours, hence the impact cannot be measured against pre-determined environmental impacts. The downside is that it may not lead to effective sustainable behaviour.

These two purposes are not either/or approaches; instead they interact and interlink. Vare and Scott do however advocate approaches that can be defined as 'exploring sustainable living' over 'promoting behaviour change', chiefly because environmental change will throw up future challenges which we cannot predict, so teaching a prescribed set of skills alone will be insufficient. This approach requires participative approaches to learning through doing. Often delivered through non-prescriptive approaches participants acquire knowledge in two contexts: learning about a problem and also building the learner's sense that they can influence it (i.e. they acquire agency).

The model presented in figure 22 above is tied to these definitions of ESD, with instrumental approaches promoting behaviour change, and transformational approaches providing opportunities for exploring sustainable living.

Each SGF project has delivered many elements, drawn from multiple points along the spectrum, reaching new audiences with relatively instrumental interventions, consolidating work with more engaged audiences, and experimenting with new innovations in ESD, community outreach, and social entrepreneurship. In their different ways, all SGF projects can be seen as innovative: that is to say SGF funding has enabled new activity everywhere. It is also the case that all SGF projects have transformational characteristics, going beyond previous models and approaches and reconfiguring relationships between students and staff, unions and schools, and with the wider community.

¹¹ Vare and Scott, (2007), Learning for change: Exploring the relationship between education and sustainable development, Journal of Education for Sustainable Development, 1(2), p.191-198, http://www.bath.ac.uk/cree/resources/LEARNING_FOR_A_CHANGE_xJESDx.pdf

Figure 23 | **Understanding approaches to change**

	<i>Element</i>	<i>Example / Potential for change</i>
1 [Incremental change]	<i>Student Switch Off¹²(SSO) and variants</i>	<p>Examples: Designed by NUS, SSO brings about specific behaviour changes among students living in halls of residence. The project is designed to provide extra incentives, like ice cream and cinema vouchers, to encourage energy saving as frequently residents lack a financial incentive to save energy as a result of inclusive billing. SSO has been a proven success, with more than 50 HEIs participating in 2013-14, reaching over 150,000 students, and reducing electricity consumption by 6%. SGF projects have built on this, either by rolling out the programme for the first time, by extending to new behaviours (e.g. recycling and water efficiency), or by extending to new contexts (e.g. private rented sector).</p> <p>Potential for change: The approach is predicated on promoting pre-defined behaviours through relatively instrumental means and is therefore plotted as the incremental end of the change spectrum.</p>
2	<i>Student Eats¹³ and variants</i>	<p>Examples: Student Eats, also an NUS programme, provides support to help students to create low-carbon, organic growing sites on their campuses. Student Eats links students' unions with their institutions and the wider community, by encouraging them to partner up with an off-campus community group such as a local school or a wellbeing charity, in order to offer demonstration sessions, volunteering opportunities and cookery events. Many SGF projects are replicating this model, or elements of it, to increase growing spaces on campus.</p> <p>Potential for change: In its purest sense, the approach is also associated with incremental change, being focused on a number of key actions, however associated activities (such as integration to the curriculum or with local communities) have the potential to be more transformational [see Edible Campus].</p>
3	<i>Green Impact¹⁴ and variants</i>	<p>Examples: Green Impact (GI) is the third of the pre-existing NUS sustainability programmes, and the widest ranging. Green Impact provides a structured framework for 'greening' the practices of an organisation through small staff teams. The structure is provided by the Green Impact workbook, which sets out a tailored action plan for teams to implement that is bespoke to each organisation. In this way, the project specifies the required behaviour changes, but also provides tips and know-how for them to develop their own techniques to encourage the required changes. There is also a reward and recognition element; as departments achieve the required changes so they progress from bronze to silver and gold. This format has been adapted to different settings by NUS, and the SGF projects have taken this further (such as local museums and historic properties (by Greenwich), and local sports clubs (by Gloucestershire)). The workbook format, and awards element, are also at the heart of efforts to adapt the programme for students living in private rented homes. Northampton University Students' Union and Sheffield University Students' Union both have programmes of this kind, targeting energy saving in private student homes [see</p>

¹² <http://www.studentswitchoff.org/>

¹³ <http://www.studenteats.org.uk/>

¹⁴ <http://www.green-impact.org.uk/>

		<p>also Home Audits below].</p> <p>Potential for change: In this context Green Impact is clearly capable of delivering significant changes, with considerable innovation arising from the new variant models being developed under SGF. While it allows for more flexibility in delivery than the other two pre-existing programmes, it still prescribes specific sustainability behaviours, giving participants a framework through which to undertake those behaviours. Therefore, GI sits at the more incremental end of the change spectrum.</p>
4	<i>Events and awards</i>	<p>Examples: Events lend momentum to public engagement campaigns and change programmes, by providing focal points at which like-minded participants can come together in groups, and demonstrate their shared social norms. Events also inject energy into project delivery, by acting as fixed points, before which progress must be made and achievements brought together. Most of the SGF projects have included events, for example Bristol's Big Give (in which students donated over 80 tonnes of unwanted items to local and national charities in year one and is on track to beat this in year two), and the Sheffield on a Plate (SOAP) consortium's food drives (which collected over 9000 items for local food banks).</p> <p>Some of these high-profile events are designed to celebrate achievements at the end of a structured programme of change. As well as developing shared norms among participants, these awards events build agency among participants, by celebrating their impacts and giving them a sense of achievement. Examples to date in the SGF programme are numerous, and include Sheffield on a Plate's Sustainable Masterchef competition for catering students, and FXU and Exeter's work addressing the hidden impacts of waste.</p> <p>As well as the use of events as focal points or celebrations in wider programmes, many participants are using face-to-face meetings as workshops, to influence peers and demonstrate new behaviours. For example, Roehampton's Hive Café runs a four-day-a-week programme of workshops and events for students, in practical areas such as food and cooking, and cycle maintenance. Meanwhile UCLan has run 'give it a go days' covering a wide range of activities and pursuits, in order to build agency among less engaged audiences, and to help them get over barriers of low confidence or lack of familiarity. A similar taster day approach has proven very useful at Bradford, as they encourage disabled students to try a range of less familiar sustainability-related sports and activities, including cycling and gardening.</p> <p>Potential for change: By building engagement in a pre-set agenda, events and awards can be seen as more incremental than transformational, being fairly prescriptive, and encouraging the modelling of behaviours. However, by encouraging new skills in a 'live' setting (as opposed to through a workbook or module), and by building new networks of participants, events and awards have catalysed new and unforeseen activities (e.g. the student sustainability research conference organised by a Bristol student volunteer). The events also have the potential to become fixtures on the university calendar in their own right [see also 'Social: Institutions' in the section above].</p>
5	<i>Home audits</i>	<p>Examples: A number of SGF projects have developed programmes to encourage students living in private rented accommodation to reduce their environmental impacts (some drawing inspiration from NUS programmes such as SSO and GI). Examples here</p>

		<p>include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energize Worcester’s project focuses on engaging both landlords and students, using a bespoke app to collect data from student properties and track their progress using benchmark energy data for each property type. 515 homes have been surveyed by trained student energy assessors, including 125 non-student homes. 185 homes have been supported in depth by student energy advocates. Through participating in the project, 20 landlords have gone on to apply for Green Deal Community funding for property improvements (though the result of these applications is still to be confirmed). Staffordshire GreenPad has worked with private student homes, including installing energy monitoring systems which update tenants with regular bulletins on their household’s energy usage, and provide feedback on how to improve performance. GreenPad has also engaged landlords to encourage a move to transparent (rather than all-inclusive) rental bills, thus giving students more control and encouraging energy saving. GreenPad has developed into a sustainable student lettings agency, with the pricing structure and level of promotion for landlords tiered according to the measures they have taken to improve the environmental impact of their properties. This follows the completion of over 200 student-led audits. • Similarly, the University of Sheffield’s ‘Green Impact in Student Homes’ (GISH) project, has worked on reducing the environmental impacts of student homes, through a workbook of guidance and recording mechanisms for student tenants. 132 households took part over the two years of funding. A core part of the project involved students encouraging their landlords to take part and vice versa. The project featured a competition element, with the highest scoring students winning a free month’s rent, and the highest scoring landlord winning funding for sustainable home improvements like solar panels and double glazing. The winning houses have been used as an exemplar of good practice – used as part of tours for both students and landlords as an illustration of how effective and beneficial environmental improvements to student accommodation can be. The university lettings agency, propertywithUS, will be continuing the sustainability ratings scheme into the future. <p>Potential for change: Home audits of this sort can be seen as instrumental in their approach to change, with prescribed actions and a workbook to instruct participants in how to follow them through. However, from the examples cited above it is clear that there is a good deal of innovation in applying the GI model in homes; furthermore, with the inclusion of other elements in the activity, to disseminate good practice, and to use the results both to improve the existing housing stock and to revolutionise the student lettings market, there is clearly ongoing potential for transformational change from these approaches.</p>
6	<i>Work placements, including gap years</i>	<p>Examples: As mentioned earlier, the SGF projects have provided their student participants with experiences and skills which increase their employability. In some cases, this has been through building community links to undertake direct engagement with local businesses. The relationships are designed to deliver two-way benefits, with students acquiring employability skills, while also teaching businesses how to operate along more sustainable lines. SGF projects are taking diverse approaches to student liaison with businesses, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brighton’s GreenSkills programme is developing the practice of finding work placements and internships for students in an explicitly pro-environmental context. GreenSkills aimed to provide ten green internships with local businesses, and ensure that students acquired work skills from the business, as well as giving them the experience, skills and inclination to embed sustainability into their future workplaces. Unfortunately, the project team found it difficult to engage with organisations in this context, with many either lacking the resources to fund an intern, or perceiving a need for more expert advice than could be offered by an intern.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gloucester's 'Big Green Gap Year' (BiGGY) project is designed to provide a constructive gap year placement as a means of advancing personal development and employability. BiGGY aims to link students with local community organisations and businesses for placements prior to university, deliberately requiring the development and sharing of sustainable business and employability skills. Following a feasibility study, 6 gap year students have been matched with local organisations, starting their placements in June 2015. <p>Potential for change: Engaging with businesses tends to involve incremental change, given the need for developing a dialogue with employers, and learning the skills that they require (as much as encouraging the practices that students would like to see workplaces adopting). Placements tend to be given at the discretion of the employer, which means it may be difficult to use them to create new ways of operating for the business concerned, or it can result in the recruitment of businesses already engaged in change. However, new concepts like the Big Green Gap Year could prove mutually beneficial for both parties, in turn transforming what it means to be employable in a modern (sustainable) workplace.</p>
7	<i>Business audits</i>	<p>One SGF project is taking a direct approach to influencing business behaviour, by developing an auditing tool to assess local businesses' ethical and environmental impacts. Southampton's BEES programme borrows from the Green Impact approach by developing an assessment tool with which specially-trained student auditors have engaged with local businesses to assess their approach to business ethics, and encourage change in key practices. 24 audits have been delivered. To an extent, this project can be treated as a Green Impact variant. In a similar experience to Brighton's GreenSkills above, the project team found that whilst student auditors were valuable, businesses were reluctant to pay for them, resulting in the scheme progressing on a free basis. This potentially suggests businesses perceived a lack of expertise in their student auditors, and that the approach is still in need of refinement in the shifting relationships between students, employers and universities.</p>
8	<i>Social enterprise</i>	<p>Examples: Social enterprises, or new products developed and owned by students' unions, are one way by which SGF projects have aimed to achieve the goal of self-funding over the longer term. These products and activities have also advanced sustainability in themselves, either by displacing less sustainable alternatives, or by serving to encourage more sustainable behaviours. Finally, the developing of new businesses and products is seen as a highly effective means for students to acquire business and sustainability life skills which will increase their employability in later life.</p> <p>Across the SGF projects, those relating to food all tend to include social enterprise elements, by selling the produce students grow, whether in dedicated 'student food markets' (e.g. Sheffield an a Plate) or just in campus cafés and shops (e.g. Birmingham City University's mobile café). Others have gone further to process their produce into products which can be sold through other supply chains (e.g. Gloucestershire building on the success of their Cheltenham Chilli Company, in which students grow chilli plants, make jam, and sell the product locally to create an ethical, sustainable and effective business model).</p> <p>Also related to food-led projects are social enterprises focused on cooking and serving sustainable food (own-grown produce, or surplus food from conventional supply chains). Roehampton's Hive Café is an example of a new food and leisure enterprise, which has proven a success with staff and students, emphasised by the successful Crowdfunder campaign to secure £20,000 to fuel an expansion of the café originally created during SGF funding. The extension will imitate the style of the existing café</p>



		<p>through its repurposing of materials (e.g. shipping containers form the café building, with upcycled and scavenged materials forming the fixtures and fittings). The project team report that the café has transformed the campus, and invigorates student engagement with sustainability in a different context.</p> <p>Other cooking and catering enterprises are arising from student-led projects, funded by unions who have chosen to use part of their SGF funding to offer small grants to student-led projects. Two successful examples which have received local recognition beyond their institutions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• City University's Project Eatro: an 'online marketplace for homemade food', in which students cook extra portions, promote and sell them online, then dine together.• Leeds University's Real Junk Food Project: a 'pay as you feel' café open to the community, and serving meals made from surplus ingredients. <p>Away from the numerous food-based projects, SGF projects have generated a wide range of innovative products and technologies. Included in this long list are software programs and apps, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energize Worcester's energy feedback app for landlords;• Cumbria's online module for teaching sustainable development skills to staff and students; and• City University's online pledging mechanism to secure support for student-led projects, which was commissioned as a bespoke tool mechanism. <p>Finally, one less virtual piece of new product development is Bradford's work developing a range of adaptive electric and pedal bicycles, suitable for use by disabled students. The project partnered up with a wide range of internal academic schools, external organisations, and commercial manufacturers, in order to turn their ideas into workable products.</p> <p>Potential for change: At the end of the funding period, these innovations are not standalone products which can be spun off from their parent unions and institutions (except perhaps The Hive Café) but all of them are capable of generating income to support future SGF-related activities, even working on the scale on which they currently operate. At the moment, it could be argued that these products and services only amount to incremental changes, however as projects progress with their legacy plans, these prototypes have the potential to be rolled out across different contexts and populations, supporting change across a wide range of audiences at different levels.</p>
9	<i>Edible campuses</i>	<p>Examples: The concept of an 'edible campus' builds on the Student Eats approach described above, but is characterised by an explicit attempt to put sustainable food at the heart of student life. This is achieved through providing access to own-grown food, but also integrating the processes of food production and consumption into everything that a university does, including its formal curricula, and its ethos. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lancaster University's SGF project is explicitly framed around becoming an edible campus. The project has amassed 20 new sites through SGF, turning unexpected areas of the campus into growing spaces. Besides using the spaces for student growing activities, the team have been working with academic departments who utilise the spaces as a teaching resource.• Roehampton's 'Growhampton' project has progressed along similar lines. The project features production-side activities



		<p>(producing almost 500kg of leafy greens over the two years of funding), as well as having some links to formal curricula. Additionally, the Hive Café provides a very tangible hub for the growing activities at Roehampton; the seal of approval achieved through a successful Crowdfunder campaign should continue to galvanise students and staff to get involved in the wider food-based work.</p> <p>Potential for change: In terms of classifying these edible campuses in terms of their approach to change, much will depend on what they can go on to achieve having laid the infrastructural foundations for an edible campus. There are some positive signs of integration with Lancaster reporting advocates from outside the Edible Campus team demanding further growing spaces are integrated into redevelopment activity on campus. The overall ambition is fully transformational: to use food as a way in to sustainability in all areas of life, from practical growing and eating, to academic research and attainment, to skills acquisition, employment and entrepreneurship.</p>
10	<i>Lettings agencies</i>	<p>The Staffordshire GreenPad project [outlined above under 'Home Audits'] is based on the existing 'student lettings agency' approach, that has been running for a number of years in many students' unions. However the project improves these services by linking them up to the mechanism of student-led audits. Student homes are advertised with a classification according to their environmental impact, with an audit made a compulsory part of the listing process. Following this, priority listings are given to the highest performing properties. With GreenPad having successfully secured the contract to deliver the university's letting agency function, this should continue drive improvements in the housing stock, and push the market for student rentals towards placing a premium on sustainable properties. While the GreenPad project in the first instance will lead to incremental improvements for Staffordshire students, in the longer term it could transform the private rented market there – and in other universities where the model could be replicated.</p>
11	<i>Green activist academies</i>	<p>Examples: Many of the SGF-funded projects made a commitment to develop students as 'change agents'. In other cases, this has been an indirect outcome of the intensive training that student co-ordinators and the most committed volunteers will have received. For example, SGF projects that have run energy audit projects have trained students to act as auditors, and in some cases that role extends beyond implementing the audit tool or workbook to acting as a general champion for environmentally-friendly practices. For example, Energize Worcester's auditors are labelled as Energy Advocates, and their training is City and Guild accredited. Likewise the trained student home auditors in Staffordshire's GreenPad project are given explicit roles as "peer-to-peer change agents". A related example comes from Bristol's ESD-focussed work. The UBU Get Green team have embedded intensive ESD 'agent of change' training into the 2014-5 Course Rep training programme. The result is that the Bristol Course Reps will be equipped to champion ESD in their courses – complementing the higher level work taking place with academics to embed ESD in formal curricula.</p> <p>One SGF project is explicitly developing a training course designed to develop students as sustainability change agents, imparting a set of flexible skills which can be applied to a wide range of challenges and organisational contexts. UCLan's 'Stand up, Stand out' can be described as an 'activist academy', designed to enable students to lead sustainability projects. Given the evidence that students are keen to use SGF activities as a pathway into employment, UCLan have positioned 'Stand up, Stand out'</p>

		<p>primarily as offering employability skills, with the strapline “Giving you the skills to lead”. Free half day training sessions are offered to any student, in which they gain the chance to learn about key skills in areas such as leadership, communication, diversity, public speaking, managing change, time management, and health and safety. 121 students have benefitted from these courses.</p> <p>Potential for change: Training activities of this kind, designed to give people flexible skills, clearly have the potential to deliver transformational change in the long term. Students have acquired critical skills which can be applied to a wide range of sustainability challenges, rather than following a set process to achieve a pre-set outcome. The development of skills in the context of either specific professional training (e.g. as an energy auditor) or wider employability and leadership training can be seen as a step towards re-defining what it means to be a competent employee or leader, with sustainability knowledge an essential component of this.</p>
12	<i>Hubs, units and cafés</i>	<p>Examples: Many of the projects funded by SGF have included the development of physical spaces from which to co-ordinate their activities. These new physical hubs are highly visible, and symbolise the central role being given to sustainability in the students’ unions, universities and colleges which have created them. In some examples, the potential for the hub to become a physical meeting point is emphasised. Roehampton and Gloucestershire are food-led projects, and both have developed outlets through which to sell their produce, but also provide new space within which students and staff working on SGF and related activities can come together. Staffordshire’s EcoHub stems from its GreenPad project and has quickly become a drop-in centre for students with housing related queries, offering the chance to engage in further sustainability activities.</p> <p>Other projects have created new institutions to co-ordinate their SGF activities. Exeter’s Student Green Unit is perhaps the best example, a dedicated body within the Students’ Guild, which acts as the interface between academic departments and the student body co-ordinating the 15 student-led projects alongside their academic mentors. Similarly, Greenwich’s Sustainability Forum is a new body in that institution; holding termly meetings among the student body, to generate ideas and feedback on their sustainability projects.</p> <p>The idea of hubs which bring students together around sustainability topics is especially critical in universities and colleges with multiple campuses. Two SGF projects have created mobile hubs which take SGF activities out to where students are, and thereby join campuses together. Birmingham City University’s mobile hub takes the form of two customised electric vans, one with a mobile café and the other with a mobile workshop for upcycled fashion. Meanwhile Bedfordshire’s Green Hub’s pop-up pod has toured the campuses and wider community, acting as the centrepiece for events and workshops.</p> <p>Potential for change: These hubs, units and outlets serve as new institutions and infrastructure, transforming the campuses and places where they appear. These kinds of material changes are necessary to enable deep change, especially in settings where there has previously been a lack of any focal point or meeting place. With the hubs in place, there is then increased potential for co-ordinated and transformational activity over the longer term – especially if the hubs themselves are self-funding</p>

		(e.g. through their double lives as cafés or shops, or just their links to other revenue-raising project activities).
13	<i>Credit unions</i>	<p>Mechanisms such as credit unions have the potential to shake up financial services markets, and to transform the circumstances (and indeed the identity) of students' unions, offering a potentially significant new line of income. As discussed above under 'work placements', Northampton aimed to set up a Sustainable Business Ethics Loan Fund. They have a close working relationship with the University of Northampton Changemaker Credit Union and the loan fund is managed and administered through the Credit Union, which provides match funding of up to £3,000 to students wanting to set up social enterprises with sustainability objectives and considerations. The fund has been challenging to set up within the union, in part a reflection of the wider student loan finance infrastructure, with students being reluctant to take on additional debt to support a business during their studies. A change in approach, with the students' union taking responsibility for loan repayments, has also been trialled but also experienced limited take up. On reflection, further work is needed to develop a viable model for students' unions to operate in this way.</p>
14	<i>Student-led funding schemes</i>	<p>Examples: A direct result of the aim of the SGF to "Initiate a step change in student engagement in sustainability issues", many projects have put leadership directly in the hands of students through student-led funding schemes. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham City University's EcoFund has sponsored a number of events and initiatives around campuses and the wider community, including upcycling furniture workshops, a day celebrating Chinese Culture and its connection with nature, and Eco team stands at community and cultural events. • Bedfordshire's grant scheme has funded waste activities including Swap Shops, end of term collections, and a recycling party. A further project is installing plants in campus buildings to reduce indoor CO2 levels. • Liverpool University has funded 10 projects working on a wide range of issues including: three cycling-related projects (a cycle safety gear loan scheme, promotion of the local cycle hire scheme, and an attempt on the world velocipede land speed record), a green i-device repair service, growing sites (allotments; rooftops), and a research project exploring the potential for growing warm-weather fruit and vegetables indoors using waste heat and light. • Wigan and Leigh College have adopted a 'Green Dragon's Den' format for selecting student-led projects, all focussing on building social responsibility through sustainability and with the support of a curriculum co-lead. • City's Green Dragon's project includes an innovative pledging system as a precursor to receiving funding, but also engages the wider student population in the project activities. 3018 pledges were received across the two years. The project has great potential for future roll out, and the ability to transform both public engagement processes, and volunteering schemes. <p>Potential for change: One of the benefits of a student-led grant scheme is the experiential learning it provides to students, who acquire employability skills through the very act of developing, and then running, a grant-funded project. However the projects themselves are also of direct value in advancing sustainability in the institutions where they run, while the most innovative may then be suitable for replication and roll out elsewhere (again, see 'social enterprises' above). On the other hand, some projects have tended towards the incremental (for instance, promoting the use of reusable bags, or raising awareness of water saving). No matter the focus of the project activity, SGF project staff have been united in reporting the benefit of in-depth engagement in triggering a transformation within the students leading the projects. This applies both in terms of their engagement with sustainability but also in their development of skills and abilities necessary to drive forward action beyond their immediate roles in</p>



		the SGF projects.
15	<i>Community grant schemes</i>	<p>A few SGF projects have extended their reach beyond the students' union by setting up grant schemes for community organisations. These community grant schemes go beyond the call for community outreach, by encouraging community groups to respond by bidding for support with the sustainability projects they need most. As such, they combine the potential of trickle-down funding schemes (like the student-led grants above) with the transformational benefits of community engagement (discussed under 'outreach' below). The leading example of such schemes is Newcastle's Green Grants programme which has funded 12 projects engaging local young people in sustainability.</p>
16	<i>Outreach community teaching activities</i>	<p>Examples: Several unions have established outreach and learning programmes working with schools in their local communities. These activities have enabled the students' union to build bridges by using sustainability challenges as the shared medium through which to collaborate, thus strengthening social capital, and advancing local sustainability. In terms of mutual benefits, both students and pupils gain in terms of increased agency and enhanced life skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In some SGF projects, the approach has been designed more to draw the community into university life, with school pupils visiting campuses to undertake learning activities. Examples include Cumbria, where the union is building new links on top of existing relationships forged through teacher training courses. Likewise, Leicester have delivered a schools strand in their edible campus project, with the Geography department opening up the campus growing activities to visits from local schools.• Other SGF projects move in the opposite direction, providing outreach activities and lessons in local schools (e.g. Greenwich). Liverpool's Green Schools project strand involved an extensive programme of volunteering in which trained students took sustainability into local schools via a bespoke programme of interactive and themed sessions. 20 local schools have been engaged in total.• One method which the Liverpool team have found very engaging is to deliver the lessons in a combination of indoor and outdoor settings. This picks up on a long tradition of outdoor learning in environmental education, and it is notable that other projects also use the natural environment as a neutral space for the two institutions to meet. Newcastle are using their outdoor growing spaces in Rupert's Wood as a site for learning sessions with schools and youth clubs. <p>Potential for change: Projects of this kind can be seen as actively transformational, in terms of building a relationship between the institution and school, where rather than the school simply acting as a feeder for future students, the university provides teaching inputs direct to the school. In terms of student development, most of these projects include students as teachers (rather than in their usual role as learners); indeed some projects have taken on students as interns to act as point of contact for this liaison work. By playing with these respective roles and identities, the outreach work finds new synergies between universities and schools, and holds out new possibilities for shared approaches between local educational settings. As such, these activities can be seen as deeply transformational, in terms of the immediate experiences of students and pupils, as well as their potential for future collaborations.</p>
17	<i>ESD projects</i>	<p>Examples: Over the past two years, SGF has become a testing ground for new approaches to ESD, with 'greening the curriculum' forming a key selection criteria for funded projects. As a result, all projects feature learning on or for sustainability in one form or another.</p>

- First there are projects which are developing new bespoke teaching modules to support learning explicitly focused on sustainability skills e.g. Cumbria's online learning module ('A day in the life') which is accessible to all staff and students. The online module provides teaching units and practical tips on how to adopt sustainable practices throughout everyday routines and is supported by optional workshops, garden days and drop-in sessions.
- The most widespread approach to delivering ESD has been focussed on embedding sustainability themes and content into formal taught courses. Both Bristol and Liverpool have developed SD training for course reps, engaged with senior leaders across the University, and run research with the student body. At Bristol, the team have reported the feeling of a steady cultural shift taking place in which sustainability is becoming the norm and the expectation. This is found to be occurring in the classroom, the Students' Union, in estates, and in the community at large – assisted by Bristol's status as European Green Capital during 2015. Meanwhile, at Liverpool the Director of Academic Development and Lifelong Learning is leading a cross-institutional working group with the aim of producing recommendations to implement the QAA/HEA guidance.
- Many of the food-led projects are linking their growing and producing activities into taught courses with different departments, including Schools of Health, Geography and Architecture (e.g. Birmingham City, Newcastle). Lancaster supported with the development of a module to accompany their Edible Campus project, which is now being used as a template for 15 academic departments.
- An alternative, and potentially even more innovative, approach to advancing ESD is underway at Exeter University. As described above under student-led funding schemes, the Students' Green Unit has administered and co-ordinated student-led projects. In terms of ESD as it is generally described, the Students' Green Unit works 'back to front': instead of embedding SD into curricula, it takes environmental solutions from academic research and links these up with student-led projects. In parallel to running the funding scheme, the Students' Green Unit has engaged with the Education Enhancement Team at the University, and other structures within the university to campaign for sustainability to be further embedded into curricula.

Potential for change: These projects can all be regarded as moving towards the transformational end of the spectrum, with an emphasis on skills learning which can underpin lasting change. In terms of change approaches, this work has the potential to revolutionise what students learn at university and the skills they come away with, while in the meantime transforming universities as institutions in their own right. Perhaps, above all, the collaborative nature of this work, and the smooth interchange between teaching and learning, mean that students and universities will continue to develop new conceptions of what skills and content are required to advance SD, potentially providing new lessons for how all peoples respond to the pressing challenges of the coming century.

Delivery of SGF

7. Delivery of SGF

7.1 Supporting the successful projects

The Students' Green Fund was delivered at NUS by a team of four key staff, including programme manager (FT), programme administrator (FT), research officer (0.5 FT) and communications officer (0.5 FT). The team was also supported by the wider sustainability team at NUS, including the head of sustainability, and additionally from external evaluator Andrew Darnton. To aid the 26 funded students' unions in the delivery of their 25 projects, NUS developed a programme of support running throughout the course of the two year funding programme, including project management, monitoring and evaluation and communications.

Reporting: Monthly and quarterly reports are submitted by projects to NUS to provide an update on progress. The reporting templates also aim to ensure project staff are taking stock and reflecting on their achievements, and identifying learning from what they are doing on a day to day basis.

Following submission of their quarterly reports, the NUS SGF programme manager, and members of the SGF team, have scheduled teleconferences with each of the project teams. These teleconferences allow the NUS team to gather in-depth information on the project activities, issues arising, progress to date, questions over their monitoring and evaluation, communications, budgeting and any other practical issues. As a result, anything that SU project staff may not have covered in the quarterly report can be aired, allowing NUS staff to keep track of progress and assist where necessary.

Support days: A series of six support days have been delivered over the two years of the fund. Each support day was delivered around a theme, including:

- *Monitoring and evaluation (September 2013)* – NUS staff aided project staff in identifying areas of work and key research questions, provided an introduction to behaviour change theory, provided guidance on how to use segmentation, and offered an introduction to research methods.
- *Project management and key skills (January 2014)* – With dedicated project staff now in place, this day focused on key skills needed for project management and communications, as well as networking between projects. Sessions ranged from working with local media to engaging academics, leaving plenty of space for sharing of good practice.
- *Experience and learning after year one (May 2014)* – Project staff provided feedback and experiences on developing partnerships within the local community, creating social enterprises, working on energy in private-rented housing, engaging students and institutions in shaping education for sustainable development and driving student engagement.
- *Carbon and ESD (January 2015)* – The project staff were provided with training and guidance on completing their carbon reduction calculations from Energise. Additionally a presentation to encourage innovative thinking around education for sustainable development was provided by Daniella Tilbury, then Dean for Sustainability at the University of Gloucestershire.
- *End of fund celebration (April 2015)* – Coinciding with Bristol's tenure as European Green Capital, this event celebrated the efforts and achievements of the SGF projects moving into the last quarter of the funding period, along with highlighting legacy plans.

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The support days have proven to be a key chance for staff to share what has and what hasn't worked effectively on campus. In response to further demand for networking opportunities, NUS set up smaller groupings of project staff, who worked on similar issues, to communicate via Skype, troubleshoot shared issues in their projects, and share useful resources. This is in addition to the SGF JISCMail¹⁵ that also provides projects with an opportunity to ask questions of each other and share resources.

"The Green Exchange team attended the NUS support day for Marketing and Monitoring and Evaluation support and have come away with some great ideas with a view to review the marketing plan for the project in the coming weeks." **Leeds**

"Support days have been a good way to network with other unions and enabled us to know that our project was part of a bigger movement. Sharing of experiences and ideas helped us to learn from others and build a more successful project. In particular, we organised a site visit to Lancaster SU's chickens, before we established our chicken project, as a result of networking at a support day." **Roehampton**

Guidance and resources: Alongside continuous ad hoc support from the NUS Students' Green Fund programme team, NUS is represented on the steering group for each of the funded projects. Steering groups meet a minimum of three times each academic year. This structured support has been particularly useful in providing guidance to project staff, as well as ensuring any potential issues have been flagged up early and solutions found.

"As we were struggling to find cost-effective and relevant training opportunities for our students it was invaluable to have the NUS SGF team to help us disperse this information and gain a lot of helpful feedback regarding this." **Staffordshire**

Providing regular opportunities to communicate with and guide project staff has helped build strong relationships with just the right amount of support and challenge, so that reporting is always punctual and of a high quality. Funded projects have responded well to this relationship and have provided honest accounts of any issues arising, welcoming support from the NUS team where appropriate.

Specific resources have also been provided, to aid projects in developing their monitoring and evaluation and communications activities. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, a handbook providing guidance and good practice has been developed, along with template questions for quantitative survey research, and case study templates for qualitative data collection. Baseline and follow-up survey research was conducted across all funded projects to track the impact of each project on students and staff, complementing the qualitative data from focus groups, interviews, reflective diaries and blogs.

SGF project feedback and suggestions for improving fund delivery: The end of fund reports also provided the SGF projects with the opportunity to feedback their perceptions of how the fund had been delivered by NUS, with appeals for honesty accompanying the request for feedback. Overall the feedback on the support on offer, along with tools and resources, has been positive:

"The direct support that we have received from the NUS throughout the Students' Green Fund project has been extremely helpful, prompt and empowering. We would like to

¹⁵ JISCMail is an email discussion list facility for UK education and research communities.

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thank the entirety of the NUS sustainability team for their extremely hard work and their consistent efforts to connect relevant projects and support progress wherever they could." **Gloucestershire**

"I joined the Edible Campus project just before the end of the first year of SGF and it has been the most positive experience of the NUS I have ever had: The support has been informed, passionate and useful throughout; the reporting structure and evaluation tools ensured we learnt and applied lessons as we went and really questioned if what we were doing was the most effective method; the network of other unions involved have been engaged and generous; there has been a good balance of clear expectations and rules mixed with common sense and understanding." **Lancaster**

A specific piece of feedback includes the flexible approach adopted to delivery. Recognising the innovative nature of many project activities, trialling new approaches and in new settings, the fund enabled projects to redefine plans when insurmountable barriers were uncovered, or if certain approaches were found to be ineffective.

"The NUS support came into its own in the flexibility shown towards pursuing the spirit and intention, if not always the absolute letter, of the bid document." **Greenwich**

SGF projects have also noted the benefits of being part of a cohort of students' unions taking action on sustainability, and through participating in a high-profile national programme.

"Being part of the SGF has opened up numerous doors to us in many ways and helped gain us recognition on both a national and international scale, which we simply would not have had the opportunity to do without NUS. Events such as the World Symposium and the Parliamentary Reception have helped us to gain institutional wide recognition for our work whilst access to national conferences and training have bolstered our ability to manage our projects effectively, sharing ideas and learning from other institutions." **Staffordshire**

"The national network has been invaluable providing a network to share practical experience around what works well and what doesn't." **Liverpool**

"We would not have been able to set up these projects without it, and their consequent success has been the proof we needed to persuade the university that student leadership can make a massive difference to attitudes on campus around sustainability and enterprise...SGF gave NUSU an opportunity to gain a higher profile and promote our positive reputation amongst the senior management team of the university for enabling student leadership, student-led enterprise and sustainability action." **Newcastle**

Many of the suggested improvements focused on the timescale of the project. The turnaround at the start of the project was frequently stated as an early hurdle to launching the project successfully in freshers' week. It was also fed back that two years (or in most cases just under two years) is a very short amount of time to achieve lasting change and some of the project targets were perhaps just too ambitious in the timescale available.

"A fairly significant challenge is that two years is a very short time to implement and run a new project. By term one in year two the team were just getting into the swing of

things and then had to start worrying about legacy funding and what was going to happen next. This could have been made easier if the funding had been announced in the spring to allow time to recruit and plan a project before the new academic year. There was a strong emphasis on legacy planning from the start which was important." **Bristol**

A few of the projects reflected that it would have been useful to have a stronger emphasis on embedding projects within students' union structures, rather than in some cases appearing to be a bolt-on to existing activities.

"The SGF project was great. The only thing that I could recommend based on my personal experience is that the unions' project plans should have been also followed by an action plan where clear roles and responsibilities were allocated to the different staff in the Student Unions. Meetings with the SU teams would also be useful to ensure that the whole team is excited about the prospect of a new project and that they are in a position to support it in terms of time and resources." **City**

Some projects also reported that they struggled given the huge range of projects funded under SGF – meaning that not all communication and training was relevant to all projects.

"The national support days would have been more helpful perhaps if the sessions focused more on developing skills each project could interpret, rather than sharing opinions of best practice, which were perhaps not relatable for many." **Cumbria**

A number of projects also felt the reporting procedures could have been more light-touch.

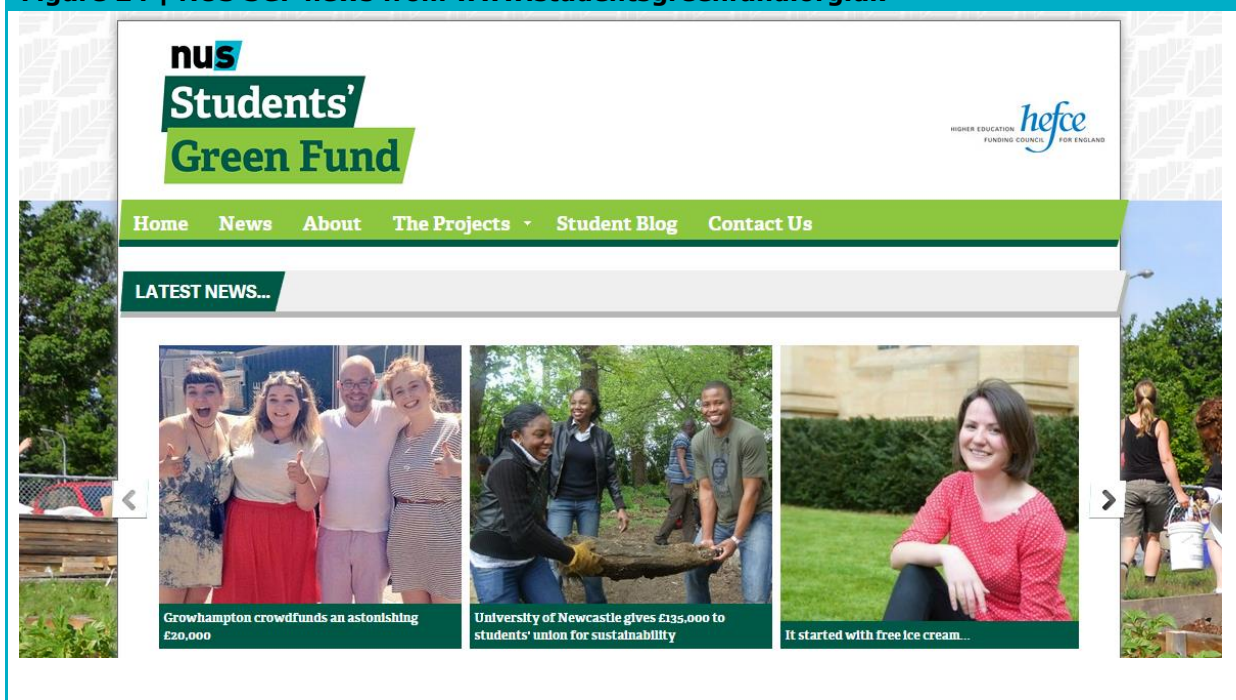
"Rather burdensome on the reporting side but to be expected considering the amount of money involved." **Bedfordshire**

7.2 Communications and dissemination

A central Students' Green Fund website¹⁶ was created, following the launch of the fund. The website features an overview of each of the successful 25 projects, along with regular updates of news stories and successes from the projects. One feature of the website is a monthly blog, written by volunteers from the individual projects. Figure 24 shows examples of recent news stories posted on the SGF website.

¹⁶ www.studentsgreenfund.org.uk

Figure 24 | NUS SGF news from www.studentsgreenfund.org.uk



These news articles have also been shared on NUS' membership platform NUS Connect, and through NUS social media channels on Facebook and Twitter (with followership of 45,462 and 42,700 respectively). This has ensured a far reaching and impactful central communications output. Since its launch, the SGF microsite has received:

- 12,012 sessions (visits to the site overall)
- 30,167 page views (independent page views within visits to the site)

As part of NUS' wider sustainability work, SGF has been showcased in outlets such as The Guardian, Resurgence & Ecologist magazine, Jellied Eel Magazine, Blue and Green Tomorrow, Green Futures magazine and Times Higher Education.

SGF projects have also been showcased in a number of core green sector outlets, such as in our regular webinar series with EAUC, and a full report on our parliamentary reception in the House of Lords in Blue and Green Tomorrow. Beyond coverage of the fund overall, individual projects have been successful at generating positive news stories for students and students' unions at the local level. The projects have been showcased in outlets ranging from student newspapers to national newspapers; from local radio, to national television.

As mentioned above, the Students' Green Fund has allowed NUS to reach a wide range of audiences and readerships. Exeter's Students' Green Unit was featured in the national Waitrose magazine, and work

Case Study | The Real Junk Food Project: Leeds Green Exchange



The Real Junk Food Project, funded through the Leeds Green Exchange Project (using surplus food to create healthy meals), has appeared on ITV news, The Guardian website, BBC News Magazine online and the Daily Mail website, representing a broad range of media, and enabling reach to a wide range of readerships.

through the Greener Gloucestershire and Growhampton projects were showcased, as part of their appearance in the Chelsea Flower Show, in the Telegraph on two occasions. Elsewhere, Newcastle's project hit brand new audiences by being featured in outlets like The Drink Business and Canny Bevvv. NUS will continue to explore general interest niches, to showcase student-led sustainability to new audiences into the second year of the fund.

The 25 projects have frequently engaged student volunteers and interns to contribute and drive communications campaigns, often resulting in incredibly creative and engaging communications, reaching thousands of students and members of the public across print, radio, social media and the web.

Case Study | Communications at Growhampton



Growhampton is an example of a project which has created dynamic web content, and used local media to drive engagement and fundraising. Across core students' union social media channels, as well as through their own, strong brands have been created for the Hive Café and the Growhampton project as a whole, as well as using traditional media like a regular gardening column in the local paper to reach people across the wider community as well as on campus.

Legacy of SGF

8. Legacy of SGF

At the application stage, SGF projects were required to build legacy plans into their proposals. As a result, nearly all projects have plans in place for how their activities will continue beyond the HEFCE funding, however a number of projects are still awaiting the outcome of further bids and proposals. This section outlines the approaches taken to ensuring legacy, along with NUS' ongoing role in supporting sustainability projects within students' unions.

8.1 What next for SGF projects?

The SGF projects have secured funding and resources to enable the continuation of their work in the following ways.

Securing funding from parent institutions: A number of the projects will continue at a similar capacity due to successful funding bids to the parent institution. For example, at Newcastle, the university has provided £135,000 to continue and expand the Students' Green Fund programme through the students' union, not only for the coming year but on an ongoing basis as part of their core funding.

Exeter Students' Guild's Green Unit will also continue funding and supporting student-led projects for the next two academic years as a minimum, after successfully receiving follow-on funding from the University.

Bristol's Get Green project has also had investment from both the Students' Union and University to ensure staff support is kept in place and project activities are well-resourced for the next academic year.

*"Bristol SU has committed to a 0.5FTE equivalent coordinator role to focus on embedding sustainability across SU practices following the SGF project. This role has been made full-time with extra funding from the HEFCE catalyst grant UoB received for Green Capital work. The funding from HEFCE via the University of Bristol has provided a full-time 'Green Capital Project Assistant' post until December 2015 and the extension of the 'Sustainability and Engaged Learning' part-time post until July 2016, which is a significant achievement in terms of legacy for the SGF project." **Bristol***

Further grant funding: A number of projects have also applied for further grant funding to continue the work started during SGF. For example, Bradford Students' Union have guaranteed funding for the dedicated staff role on their Cycling 4 All for the next academic year, but are seeking external funding for additional costs associated with the project activities. To date over £500,000 of funding bids have been submitted and they are awaiting responses from 30 different proposals.

Gloucestershire's Big Green Gap Year (BiGGY) Coordinator is currently seeking funding, in the form of grants and sponsorship, for future delivery on a larger scale. BiGGY will initially remain a Gloucestershire-based programme, as the value of retaining positive relationships with placement providers is important for successful legacy of the programme. Further to this, with the successful delivery of an up-scaled six month BiGGY programme at Gloucestershire, national delivery at other institutions will be considered.

Enterprise funding: For some of the projects, their legacy plans are a mixture of central funding for staff posts and drawing income for their project activities from more enterprising means.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Growhampton team at Roehampton have sought funding through a non-traditional route, successfully securing £20,000 through a Crowdfunder campaign. The Hive café, as a standalone social enterprise, is already financially self-sustainable, but the students' union now plan to get to the stage where it is generating enough additional profit to cover the core costs of the entire Growhampton project, as well as support the development of new initiatives. This will be achieved by tripling the seating space, meaning The Hive can serve more customers.

*"Our aim is for the whole of the Growhampton project to be fully financially sustainable without reliance on external funding." **Roehampton***

At Gloucestershire, a new post, Opportunities and Sustainability Coordinator, has been created to lead on project activities going forward, but numerous elements will continue in a self-financing capacity. In addition, to fund new student-led social enterprises in the coming academic year, and beyond, Gloucestershire are creating a personalised crowd funding platform which will be launching in September 2015.

To support the existing social enterprises (Cheltenham Chilli Company and Core Blimey), the project team have developed partnerships with academic departments, who will embed the enterprises as projects within courses. Students will work directly on the enterprises, developing subject relevant skills.

Creating staff positions: As touched on above, for many of the projects, SGF has indirectly led to additional staff being introduced, to embed sustainability more broadly across the students' union. Both Sheffield and Southampton have had full-time roles introduced, as a result of their SGF projects, with strategic oversight for embedding sustainability throughout their students' unions.

*"As described in the project proposal, the Sustainability Zone received increased staff support from January 2015, with the appointment of the Sustainability Co-ordinator and Policy and Volunteer Manager. The BEES Programme has been developed as a core part of the Zone led by the VP Welfare and will be taken forward within this structure. With this additional resource, the Zone has also been able to deliver further projects, improving sustainability awareness and literacy of students." **Southampton***

The fact that, during Sheffield Students' Union's recent restructure, sustainability was one of the few areas that emerged with more core funding than ever before, is largely down to the impact of the Students' Green Fund. Over the last two years, through the Green Space and our project work, we have established a presence in the building and a sense that this work is important to the organisation and to students. This meant that at the beginning of 2014/15 we were well



Southampton BEES - Launch Event

*placed to engage the new officer team, and their support has been invaluable in securing this legacy" **Sheffield University***

Creating student leadership: For some projects, mainly based in smaller students' unions, the projects will continue with less staff capacity but greater student leadership. For example, at Brighton, specific strands of the Bright 'n' Green project will continue without reliance on staff support – for example, the bicycle co-operative which will be student-led from September onwards.

FXU are also continuing various strands of their project, but with the emphasis on student leadership. Their digital detox energy-saving campaign, plastic waste reduction social enterprises, farm stall, and food waste collections will continue under student leadership.

*"With the SGF providing the infrastructure (caddies), and the systems in place, FXPlus and a group of volunteers will continue to manage the food waste collections." **FXU***



Embedding within existing students' union capacity: Another approach adopted by projects who have been unable to secure specific staff funding, has been to embed delivery within existing roles in the students' union. For example, at City, the Green Dragons project will continue for the year 2015/16, but without the dedicated staff role that was in place whilst receiving SGF funding. The students' union received an additional £5000 pot of funding from the university, for new student-led projects, whilst many of the existing Green Dragon student-led projects will continue to run and receive support from the Activities Coordinator in the students' union.

Cumbria are still looking for additional funding to support the dedicated project staff member, but have confirmed plans for certain elements of their project to continue with minimal staff oversight. For example, their project strand 'The Eco Warrior', which focused on engaging with local schools, will now become a Lancaster-based student-led project, supported by the students' union Volunteering Facilitator.

Scaling and replicating projects: Again, taking the example of Gloucestershire, projects have also considered the potential of their work to be rolled out across other students' unions, universities and communities. In many cases, NUS is supporting these developments. For example, Green Impact will continue to be delivered by the University of Gloucestershire Students' Union, acting as a local delivery hub of the NUS' programme. The new Sustainability and Opportunities Coordinator will be delivering the programme with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), and will continue to provide Green Impact in the county to local organisations.

Also at Gloucestershire, the Global Athletes Award will be piloted across several university campuses in its first year of expansion. The Global Athletes Award hopes to

engage sports teams across all universities in the UK, and to produce a robust model which can be replicated internationally.

8.2 NUS' role in supporting SGF projects

Whilst the dedicated SGF staff team will no longer be in place to provide such in-depth support projects going forward, this does not signal the end of NUS' relationship with the SGF cohort of projects. These 25 projects have been exemplars in creative and effective student-led sustainability projects and campaigns, and NUS will continue to disseminate the learnings and successes of the projects across the wider student movement, through national forums, such as our Student Sustainability Summit, SUs Local events, and regular webinar series. NUS will also be continuing to support various strands of projects which have adapted and innovated existing programmes, such as Green Impact and Student Switch Off, drawing on the learning achieved through SGF and translating this into the projects delivered across the UK.



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